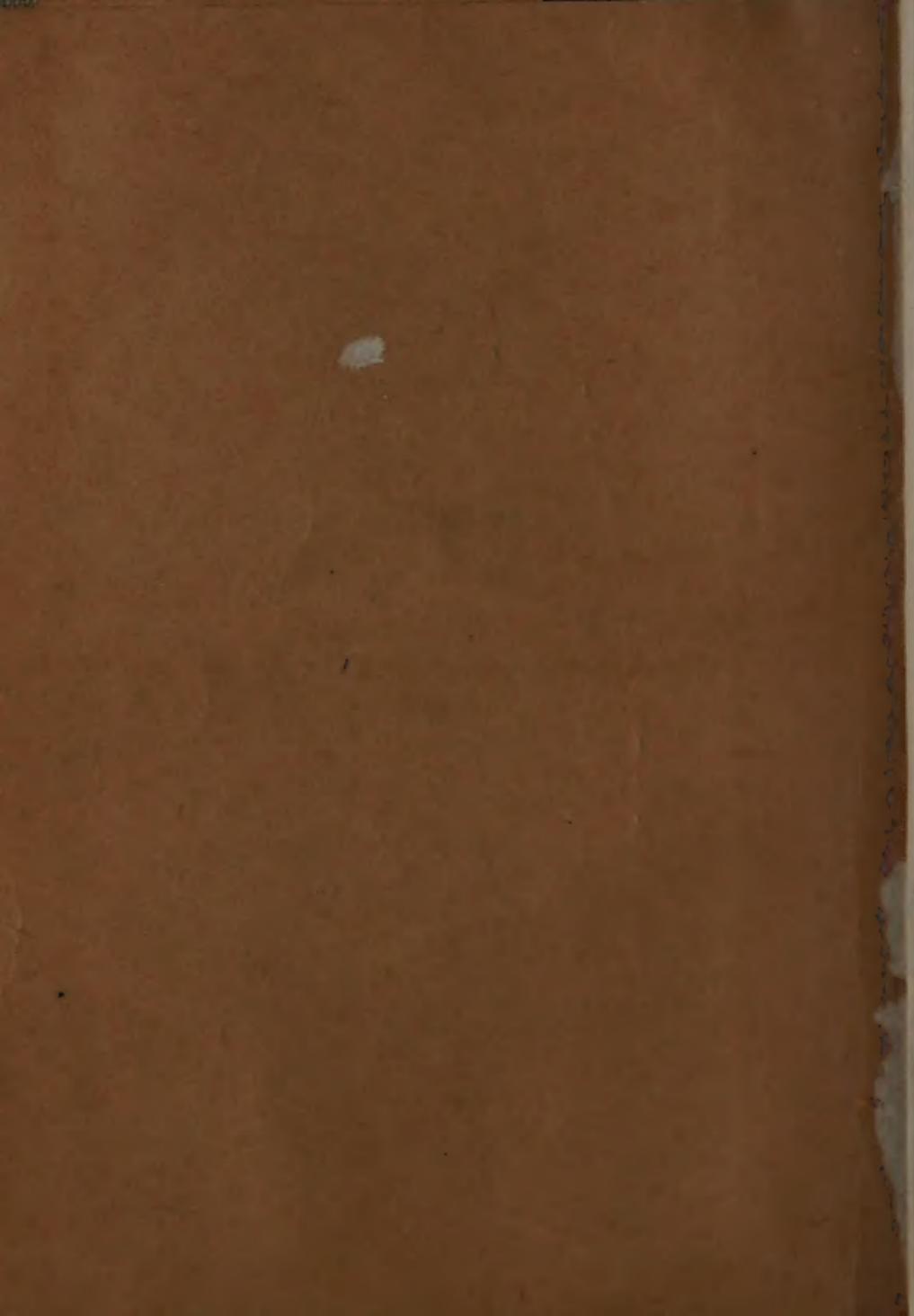


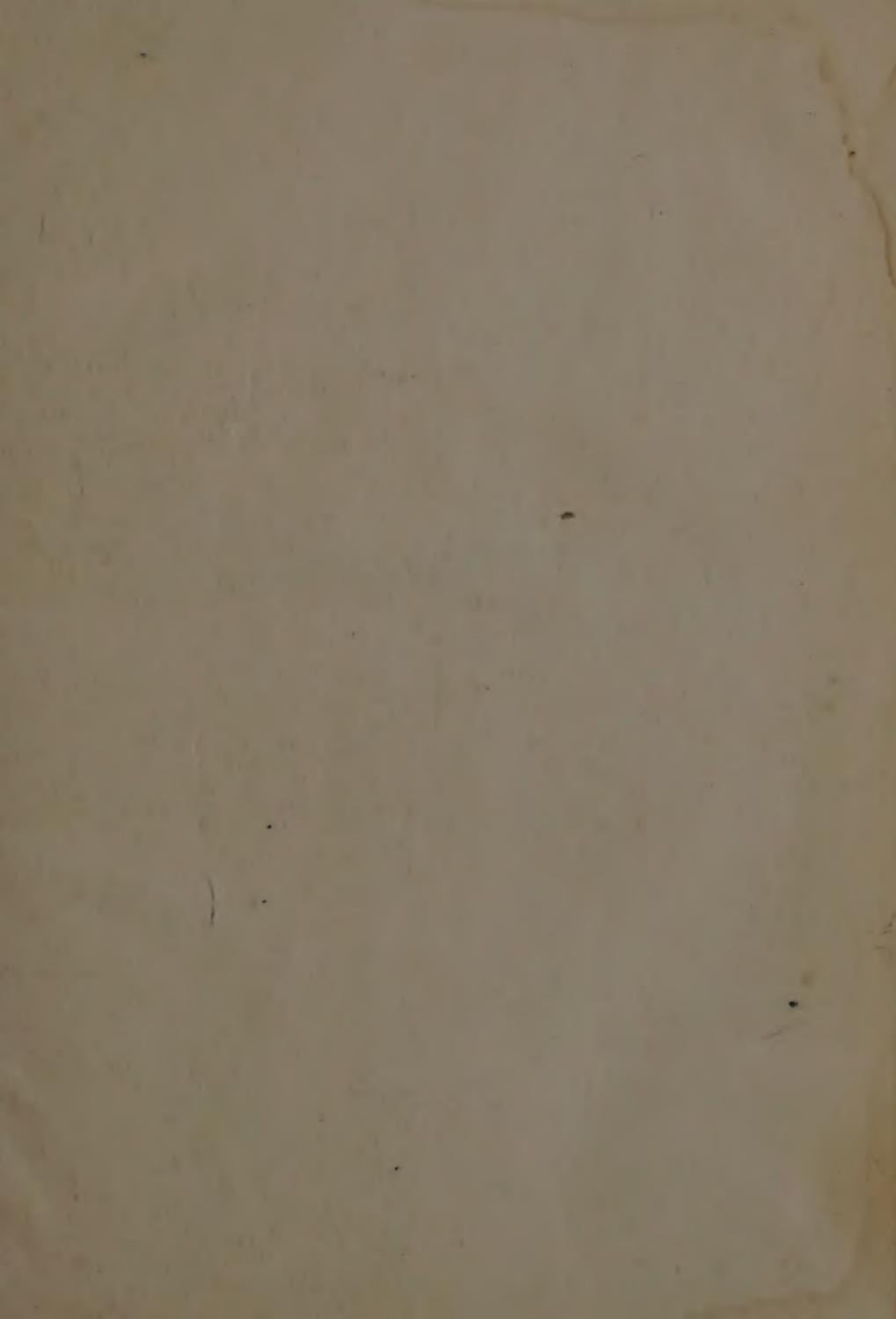
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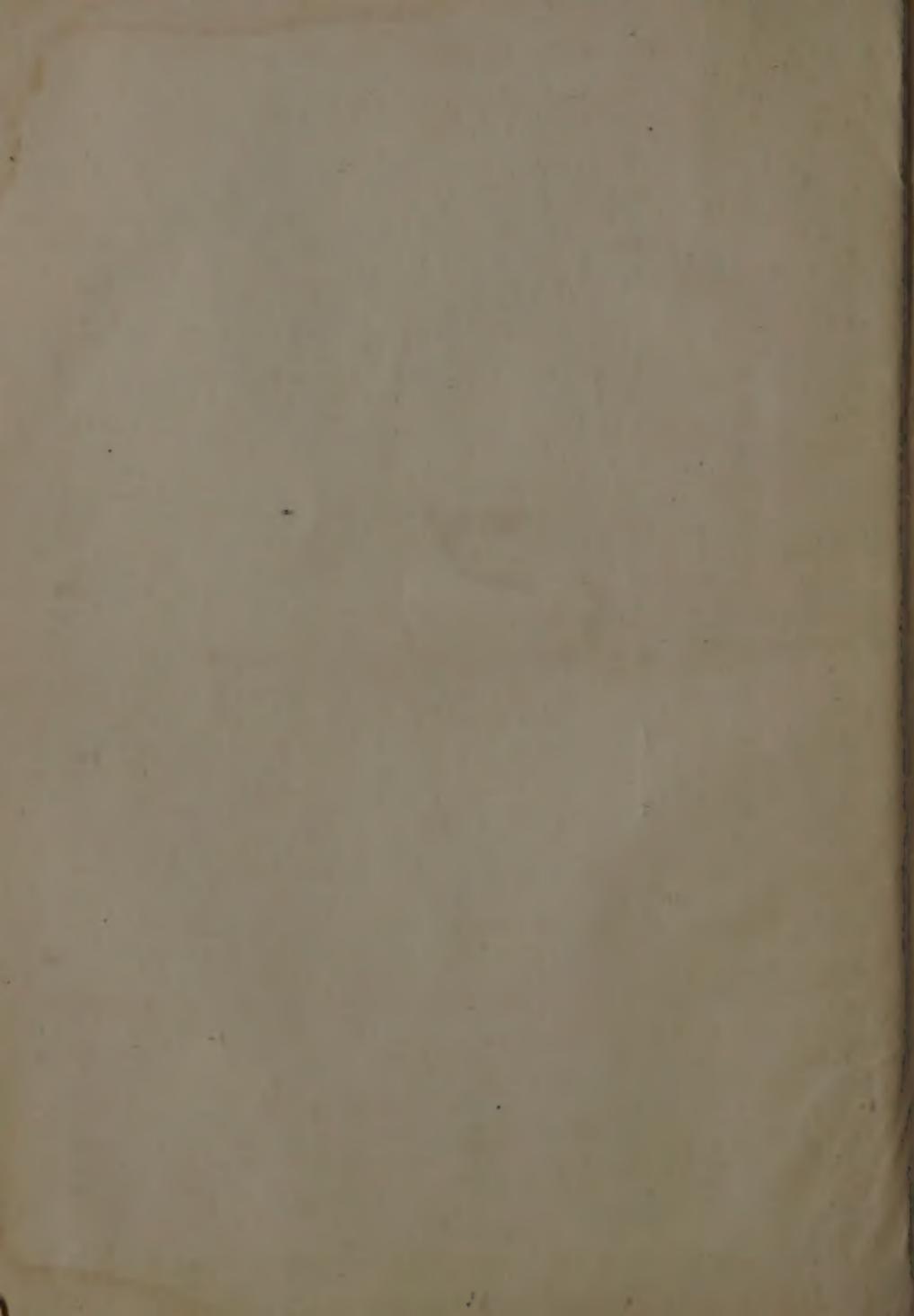
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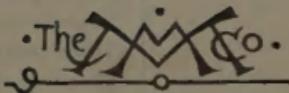
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From an edition of 1529

SELECTIONS
FROM
SIR THOMAS MALORY'S
Le Morte Darthur

EDITED WITH INTRODUCTION, NOTES,
AND GLOSSARY

BY

DOUGLAS W. SWIGGETT, A.B.

THE MASTER'S COLLEGE
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PREFACE

THE text of these selections is that of Mr. Pollard's edition of the *Morte Darthur*, of which the editor says: "The most anxious care has been taken to produce a text, modernized as to spelling, but in other respects in accurate accordance with Caxton's text as represented by Dr. Sommer's reprint." A very few brief elisions have been made; longer omissions are indicated by the chapter numbers, and are commented on in the notes.

I am indebted to Professor H. M. Belden and Professor A. H. R. Fairchild of the University of Missouri for helpful suggestions; to Mr. Charles A. Read of the University of Cincinnati for free access to the Library of the University. Professor A. C. L. Brown of Northwestern University has read a part of my introduction, and aided me with his knowledge of the subject. Finally, Dr. Howard Maynadier of Harvard University has read the whole of my introduction, and assisted me with his criticism.

D. W. S

INTRODUCTION

ARTHUR and the Round Table ! What a host of stories of knightly deeds and marvellous adventures the words bring up ! recollections of the good old days, when all ladies were fair and all gentlemen were knights, brave and courteous. Around Arthur, the central figure, are grouped stories of numerous heroes of chivalry. No one character in all the range of English literature has been the theme of so many writers. And who was this Arthur ? We still ask did he really exist, or was he created only by the imagination which has given us so many of the marvellous deeds of his knights ? Caxton, who published the *Morte Darthur*, was not sure, nor have scholars since his time been certain, that Arthur ever really existed. Now they are coming to believe that there was a real Arthur, far different, it is true, from the literary Arthur, but still a British hero and leader. His history was perhaps something like this :—

By the year 410 the Romans, who had occupied Britain since 43 A.D., had left it. The Britons, lacking the powerful defence of the Roman legions "and Cæsar's eagle," began to suffer from the attacks of their island neighbors, the Picts and Scots, and presently from the invasions of a much worse foe, the Saxons of the North. These Saxons at first swept all before them, but in the course of their conquest of Britain suffered two decided checks. The second and greater was the result of a series of British victories about the year 500. For almost fifty years thereafter the Saxons were held in

check; then the conquest began again, and ended only with the subjugation of the Britons, which left them in Strathclyde, Wales, and Cornwall, and ultimately in Wales only. Nennius, a historian of the early ninth century, gives the number of these British victories as twelve, and tells us that the successful leader was "the magnanimous Arthur." But the trustworthiness and even the very existence of Nennius himself have been much questioned, and only in recent years does it seem to have been established that he is entitled to date from the ninth century and his sources from a much earlier time.¹

Now these fifty years, as Dr. Maynadier points out, "were a remarkably bright page in the history of the Britons." If they were going in future times to tell their legends about a great British hero, it would be very probably the leader of this last successful campaign of the British nation. Accordingly story has been added to story, and told of Arthur or of a knight of his court, until Arthur has become the great central figure of a cycle. The very fact that the Anglo-Saxon chronicles have little to say about these fifty years of British success is, as Professor Brown has said, our best proof of a historical Arthur.

But we have no sooner determined the nature of the real Arthur than we must leave him. For he was a British leader, a warrior of times much earlier than the age of chivalry, who more probably had a dog than a horse, and who certainly did not wear armor nor hold tourneys. In the twelfth century one Geoffrey of Monmouth wrote a *History of the Kings of Britain*, — at least that is what he called it; others both in his own time and ever since have not hesitated to term it fiction, — romance pure and simple. In Geoffrey's pages we

¹ Professor H. Zimmer, *Nennius Vindicatus*. Berlin, 1893.

find for the first time the other Arthur, the flower of knighthood, whose noble deeds and noble knights were to enrich English literature with their fame. And this Arthur of romance, who is most certainly no historical personage, is more real than the other; for from Geoffrey of Monmouth's time literature has not ceased to deal with him and his knights of the Table Round. Heroes who had been popular and renowned before now became knights of the Round Table. Stories were changed so that adventures which had had no connection with King Arthur were made at least to begin at his court; and the inspirer of knightly deeds, the registrar of knightly vows, and the judge who awarded the prize, was Arthur.

The earliest romances of Arthur's court are in French, and belong to the twelfth century. The greatest of the early writers was Chrétien of Troyes, whose verse narratives of Lancelot, of Perceval, of Iwain, and of Erec became speedily popular. They were continued and imitated in verse, and then in long prose romances. In England we find so-called chronicles written in French which are really romances in spirit; and these are followed by the English metrical romances. Nor are these tales of Arthur found only in England and France. Our most artistic story of the Holy Grail is the *Parzival* of Wolfram von Eschenbach; another German told charmingly the story of Tristram and Iscuit; a Dutch writer left a *Lanzelet*, and the stories were widely popular in Spain, Portugal, and Italy, and reached even to the Scandinavian kingdoms.

But whence came these stories originally: for they cannot of course be historical tales? Are they Welsh — the property of those Britons who were Arthur's own people? If so, they are not preserved for us in early Welsh literature, of which little remains. We have, indeed, in the *Mabinogion*,

two old Welsh tales of Arthur which show no signs of having been influenced by French literature brought over by the Normans. Confused tales they are which take us to the gates of an age we know not. But the earliest Arthurian stories are French, and it has been not unnaturally contended by many scholars that the stories themselves arose in France, whither some traditions of Arthur might have been carried by the Bretons, those Britons who settled in Brittany, the northernmost peninsula of France.

Most scholars, however, now maintain that the stories are British in origin. In treatment they are of course French, but the essential elements are found in that other branch of early Celtic literature, the Irish. The names are not the same; details frequently differ; but the fundamental situations and incidents show a close agreement. Of early Irish literature we have much more than of the Welsh, and it is not unnatural to suppose that the folk-lore and traditions of these two branches of the Celtic race were originally the same, nor to draw the conclusion that if we had the early Welsh literature, we should find in it many of these Irish stories, which, with different names and some modification of setting, appear centuries later in the French romances of Arthur.

The French romances were followed in the twelfth and succeeding centuries by the Middle English verse romances. These usually deal with the adventures of a particular hero of Arthur's court: Gawain is popular, and later Lancelot, and Tristram as well, while the *Death of Arthur* is the title of two romances from which Malory himself has drawn.¹ Some of

¹ *Morte Arthure* and *Le Morte Arthur*. Professor J. D. Bruce and Professor W. E. Mead, indeed, believe that Malory did not use *Le Morte Arthur*, but for the linguistic argument Professor Bruce contents himself with the examination of verbal similarities made by Professor Mead, who discusses only a portion of the most striking similarities of language, and neglects entirely the significant fact that these similari-

the romances are difficult reading; others scarcely more so than Chaucer. They belong, indeed, to Chaucer's time, but lack his modern tone.

Popular poetry also employed the subject of Arthur and his knighthood. The first six ballads of Professor Child's collection well illustrate the features of the Arthurian tales which appealed most strongly to the ballad writer, and therefore, it must be supposed, to his listeners. With this brief notice of the early literature we come to the great landmark in the story of Arthur—the *Morte Darthur* of Sir Thomas Malory.

Of Sir Thomas Malory we know that he finished his book in the ninth year of the reign of King Edward IV, and this is all that we know. The book was printed by Caxton in 1485, over fifteen years after its completion. For many years there was not even a probable identification of the author, but a few years ago Professor G. L. Kittredge made investigations and published results which deal very practically with the question.¹

Professor Kittredge first shows: (1) that the author must have been a knight; (2) that he must have been alive in the year mentioned (1469–1470), and (3) old enough to have written this book; (4) that it seems probable that he was dead at the time the book was published in 1485. Then follows an account of a knight who fulfils all these condi-

ties occur in *clusters*, and are not therefore "occasional," as Professor Bruce terms them, or examples of "slight verbal agreement," as Professor Mead has called them. Moreover both scholars neglect the striking coincidence that a statement not found in the French source, and attributed by Malory to "some English books" is found in *Le Morte Arthur*. See note "some English books," p. 274. Dr. Maynadier remarks that Malory's use of the title *Morte Darthur* suggests that he drew a good deal from these romances.

¹ *Who was Sir Thomas Malory?* in Harvard Studies and Notes in Philology and Literature, Vol. V.

tions, and seems, besides, as Professor Kittredge remarks, "just the man to write the *Morte Darthur*."

Sir Thomas Malory of Newbold Revell, Warwickshire, was the son of Sir John Malory. He would appear to have been born about 1400 (the year of Chaucer's death, it will be remembered). His father had been Sheriff of Leicestershire and Warwickshire; in 1413 he was Knight of the Shire for Warwick. His ancestors had for generations been distinguished persons. Thomas undoubtedly received the education of a gentleman, learning to read, speak, and write French as a matter of course. In his youth he served in the French war under Richard, Earl of Warwick. This is significant, for the Earl of Warwick represented the ideal of chivalry in his age. In the life of Richard we are told that "by the emperor's (Sigismund) auctorite he was called the Fader of Curteisy."¹ Here, then, was an experience in early life which may have given Malory that chivalric ideal which appears in his admiration for Launcelot and his fondness for Gareth, "the good knight."

Sir John Malory must have died in 1433 or 1434, when Thomas succeeded to the estates. In 1445 he represented his county (Warwick) in Parliament. Apparently he was a notable Lancastrian in the Wars of the Roses, for in 1468 he was excluded from a general pardon granted by Edward III. This, it will be noticed, is about the time when the *Morte Darthur* was probably written, and the book may be the result of Malory's living in retirement. It is probable that he was later pardoned. March 14, 1471, he died, leaving a widow, Elizabeth, and a grandson, Nicholas. These, briefly, are the facts in the life of a Sir Thomas Malory, who, so far as we can see, might have written the *Morte Darthur*, and who, we may well believe, was its author.

¹ Quoted by Dr. Maynadier, *Arthur of the English Poets*, p. 223.

Not only to Malory, however, do we owe our debt for the *Morte Darthur*. Very little less important is his printer, William Caxton, who preserved and perpetuated Malory's book, as he did many other books of the day. Caxton was born in 1422, and learned at Bruges the trade of printing. In 1477 at Westminster he printed the first book ever printed in England. In fourteen years he printed nearly eighty separate books and more than eighteen thousand pages. He showed, too, considerable literary taste, printing the poems of Gower, Lydgate, and Chaucer. Moreover, he did more than print; for he translated twenty-one books, exhibiting a style of his own, and by his English and his perpetuating it in printed form did something to fix the literary language of the sixteenth century. He died in 1491, and on the very last day of his life was engaged in translation. Thus not only to Malory do we owe these stories of Arthur, but also to Caxton, the first English printer.

"The great prose achievement of the fifteenth century, and indeed of the whole time before the *Advancement of Learning*," Professor Ker calls the *Morte Darthur*.¹ "First in popularity and first in interest to him who is seeking the antecedents of the modern novel," says Professor Cross, "are the legends of King Arthur and the Round Table."² And here in Malory's book we find the legends as they took shape for most readers. And a queer, long, and rambling book it is, too; rapid in action, it is yet so replete with actions similar to each other, that we sometimes wish Malory had "reduced it" a little more. Again he has given us some of the finest stories in Arthurian romance, but he has been far from giving us the best versions of all the stories. The story of Tristram, for instance, is found in finer forms, and Malory's account of the

¹ *Essays in Mediaeval Literature*, by W. P. Ker, p. 22.

² *The Development of the English Novel*, by W. L. Cross, pp. 1-2.

quest for the Holy Grail follows a late version, which loses much of the charm of the earlier stories. Most lamentable, perhaps, is the deterioration in Malory's pages of some of the noblest characters of the earlier literature. Gawain is the most notable example; originally courteous, courageous, and true, he was second to no knight of Arthur; in Malory, doubtless because Launcelot is now the popular favorite, Gawain has degenerated to a mere courtier, polished but deceitful.

Arthurian literature since Malory belongs to that age which we call modern. And English literature has not ceased to treat in prose and poetry, in verse, epic, dramatic, and lyric, the theme of the Table Round. We may note only a few of the best-known works. In prose, in spite of the importance of the cycle to the history of the novel, we find few books dealing with the story itself. That rare and curious novelist, Thomas Love Peacock, has taken for his story of *The Misfortunes of Elphin*, an old Welsh tale which takes us to Arthur's court; but the book, delightful as it is, is probably little read. In Mr. Warwick Deeping's *Uther and Igraine* we have a novel of to-day, which is interesting as one of the latest attempts to use the old material.

Dramatic literature of Arthur is more voluminous. It begins with a sort of play presented before Queen Elizabeth, and called *Arthur's Show*. We can, however, only conjecture what the nature of this play was. Another play, the not very successful *Misfortunes of Arthur* of Thomas Hughes, was also acted before the great queen. *The Birth of Merlin*, written probably by William Rowley, was ascribed for a long time to Shakespeare. But on the whole, Elizabethan drama preferred other subjects to the story of Arthur. Dryden was the next poet to give the story a dramatic setting in his opera of *Arthur, the British Worthy*, which seems to have owed a very considerable success to the music to which it was set.

Fielding played with the subject in his burlesque drama of *Tom Thumb*. Various dramatists have written other plays of Arthur with varying success. We must notice particularly an American writer, the late Richard Hovey, who planned to tell the story of Arthur in a whole series of dramas, but lived to complete only the masques of *Merlin* and *Taliesin*, and the plays of *The Marriage of Guenevere* and *The Birth of Galahad*. Hovey's work is well worth reading; he is modern in spirit, and has made free changes in the old relationships. The most successful plays of recent years are the work of Mr. J. Comyns Carr, whose *King Arthur*, graced by the acting of the late Sir Henry Irving, of Miss Ellen Terry, and of Mr. J. Forbes-Robertson, met with great applause. Since then he has produced *Tristram and Iseult*.

But the merely dramatic productions have been far eclipsed in fame by the music dramas of Richard Wagner, who has told to the accompaniment of magnificent music the stories of *Tristan and Isolde*, of *Lohengrin*, the Swan knight, and of *Parsifal*, the early hero of the Holy Grail. These operas are the only stage presentations of the old story which compare in importance with the other literature.

For it is neither in novel nor in drama that Arthur really comes into his own, but, as might be expected, in narrative story. Spenser, in the great Elizabethan age, in the very century after Malory, has taken the knights of Arthur for his theme, and made free use of Malory's own work. He has handled his sources freely after the manner of Elizabethans, and the *Faerie Queene* is far from being a new version of *Morte Darthur*; it is an original work which uses the older stories, enriching them with the imagination of a great poet. To Milton also the story of Arthur long appealed with peculiar force, and he contemplated an epic poem on the theme, but gave it up to write the greater, more ultimate epic of the fall

of man. Dryden, too, meditated an epic, but perforce wrote what his age demanded, and produced, as we have seen, only an opera of mediocre interest.

Among the romanticists Sir Walter Scott is chiefly notable for his interest in Arthur. He edited and completed the old metrical *Sir Tristrem*, and in *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* and *The Bridal of Triermain*, used again in English poetry the old stories. Wordsworth, too, belongs to the poets of this cycle through his little lyric of *The Egyptian Maid*. We must omit any description of the tedious narrative poems of Sir Richard Blackmore and of Bulwer-Lytton, and come to the poets of the Victorian Age.

Few lovers of Arthur and his knights have not met them first in Lord Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*. In these idylls, framed loosely into the form of an epic, the story of Arthur has received its most distinguished treatment. From the publication of the *Lady of Shalott* in 1832 to the publication of *Merlin and the Gleam* in 1889, Tennyson was occupied with the Arthurian poems, and the very fact that he takes for an allegory of his own poetic career the imagined words of Merlin is significant of the place which he felt the Arthur story held in his work. Of *The Lady of Shalott*, Dr. Maynadier well says that it remains the most exquisite of Arthurian lyrics. Its story is too well known to need retelling, its combination of mystery and melody too charming to describe. Besides these two there are the fragment of *Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere*, with all the charm of the pre-Raphaelite poets and something more, the stirring song, *Sir Galahad*, and the *Idylls*. The last are the form which Tennyson finally chose for his treatment; how fitting that form and how wonderful a success the poems, probably every one who reads this introduction knows. It will not be necessary to dwell on the perfection of Tennyson's treatment of the story. He

has made of it an allegory, as Spenser made it into an allegory, but with a modern tone. Doubtless this has contributed largely to making the *Idylls* popular in our age; for it is not of late an age in which a purely narrative poem makes a great appeal. Judged with the slight perspective of less than two decades since the death of Tennyson, the *Idylls* seem to present the story of Arthur in a form as nearly ultimate as they are likely to attain for many, many years, perhaps forever.

Besides Tennyson, the most notable Victorians have been Matthew Arnold, Algernon Charles Swinburne, and William Morris. Arnold has retold a part of the story of Tristram and Iseult. The other two belong to the school called pre-Raphaelite, and, very differently from Tennyson, depict especially the human side of the story. Morris's *Defence of Guenevere*, as its name suggests, views the story of Launce-lot and Guenevere, if not with justification, at least with sympathy for the wrong-doers. The late Mr. Swinburne's *Tristram of Lyonesse* is the only modern poem telling the story of Tristram at all completely. It follows pretty closely the original story, though no one version of it. Swinburne's *Tale of Balen* and Tennyson's *Balin and Balan* afford an excellent opportunity for comparison; for both are drawn from the same source, a short book (the second) of the *Morte Darthur*. Such a comparison, however, although interesting, must not be regarded as wholly fair to Tennyson; for the idyll of *Balin and Balan* is not one of the best. Nevertheless, it illustrates very well the contrast between the poets.

It is impossible, of course, to discuss all the poets who have dealt with the Arthur story; it is intended merely to suggest the place which it has held in English literature, and which it continues to hold. Happily, a very clear and very interesting introduction to Arthurian literature is available in

Dr. Maynadier's *Arthur of the English Poets*, a book which no one who is interested in Arthur can afford to do without. Of late there has seemed to be a tendency to treat the subject in a light way, but it is no new thing; any subject as great as that of Arthur must inevitably be burlesqued, and Mark Twain's *Yankee at King Arthur's Court* is only a degenerate literary descendant of Fielding's *Tom Thumb*. Mr. Charlton Lewis has treated the early English romance of *Gawayne and the Green Knight* in light, amusing verse; a more entertaining version is to be found in Miss Weston's prose rendering. Still less noteworthy are some verses called the *New Idylls*. But it is always to be remembered that the boys who follow the circus are not a part of the parade, and do bear witness to its interest.

The present edition of selections aims to present some of the most interesting of Malory's stories, the sources also of some of the most popular of Tennyson's *Idylls*. As always with selections, some lamentable omissions must be made, and the present editor regrets especially the story of Balin and Balan and the tale of Tristram and Iseult. The text differs from Caxton's only in that the spelling is modernized and the type is not black letter. There are a few excisions to which attention has been called, but no changing of Malory's language. The reader who becomes really interested in Malory will, of course, wish a complete edition, and happily several convenient editions with modernized spelling are now available.

The student of Malory will care most for his style. "He is," says Sidney Lanier, "the very first writer who shows a sense of the rhythmical flow and gracious music of which our language is so richly capable." Other qualities, too, will be noted. Malory's movement is rapid, though his story suffers from frequent digression and the multiplication of similar

incidents: too many times doubtless we read of "rasing tras-
ing, and foining to the mountenance of an hour"; too often
we tarry over a combat, the outcome of which is evident to
us. Yet Malory is to be lauded rather than blamed; for his
book is many times shorter than the sources from which he
drew. It must certainly appear that Malory lacks a sense
of humor; the really funny passages of *Morte Darthur*
are droll situations in which the writer is wholly unconscious
of the drollery. But what Malory lacks in humor he makes
up in pathos. We shall look long for a nobler piece of Eng-
lish prose than his account of the death of Arthur: the lament
of Ector for Launcelot, the letter of Gawain on his death-bed,
and Launcelot's grief for the death of "mine own friend
Sir Gareth," are all illustrations of the writer's tenderness
and strength. And finally the grief of Arthur over the
departure of his knights to seek the Holy Grail: "And
so it forthinketh me a little, for I have loved them as well as
my life, wherefore it shall grieve me right sore, the departition
of this fellowship; for I have had an old custom to have them
in my fellowship." Such passages have not been surpassed.

The morality of Malory's work has more than once been
called in question. That learned Elizabethan teacher, Roger
Ascham, condemned it harshly. "The whole pleasure of the
book," he says in *The Scholemaster*, "standeth in two especial
points, in open manslaughter and bold bawdry"; but the
judgment of time has not confirmed his criticism. We do
not believe in the *un-moral*, as it is called, in a book of this
character; but we do believe that the attitude of the author
toward his matter, provided that attitude be genuine, largely
determines the morality of a book. And no one can doubt
Malory's reverence for good and knightly qualities and his
hatred of evil. The ideal of the writer is as nearly expressed
by Gareth, "the good knight," as by any other character,

however mighty or brilliant. And so we say with Caxton: "Herein may be seen noble chivalry, courtesy, humanity, friendliness, hardiness, love, friendship, cowardice, murder, hate, virtue, and sin. Do after the good and leave the evil, and it shall bring you to good fame and renown."

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PREFACE OF WILLIAM CAXTON

AFTER that I had accomplished and finished divers histories, as well of contemplation as of other historical and worldly acts of great conquerors and princes, and also certain books of ensamples and doctrine, many noble and divers gentlemen of this realm of England came and demanded me many and oft times, wherefore that I have not do made and imprint the noble history of the Saint Greal, and of the most renowned Christian king, first and chief of the three best Christian, and worthy, King Arthur, which ought most to be remembered among us Englishmen to-fore all other Christian kings ; for it is notoyrly known through the universal world, that there be nine worthy and the best that ever were, that is to wit, three Paynims, three Jews, and three Christian men. As for the Paynims, they were to-fore the Incarnation of Christ, which were named, the first Hector of Troy, of whom the history is comen both in ballad and in prose, the second Alexander the Great, and the third Julius Caesar, Emperor of Rome, of whom the histories be well known and had. And as for the three Jews, which also were to-fore the incarnation of our Lord, of whom the first was duke Joshua which brought the children of Israel into the land of behest, the second David king of Jerusalem, and the third Judas Machabeus,° of these three the Bible rehearseth all their noble histories and acts. And since the said Incarnation

have been three noble Christian men, stalled and admitted through the universal world into the number of the nine best and worthy. Of whom was first the noble Arthur, whose noble acts I purpose to write in this present book here following. The second was Charlemain, or Charles the Great, of whom the history is had in many places, both in French and in English. And the third and last was Godfrey of Boloine,^o of whose acts and life I made a book^o unto the excellent prince and king of noble memory, King Edward the Fourth.

The said noble gentlemen instantly required me to imprint the history of the said noble king and conqueror King Arthur, and of his knights, with the history of the Saint Greal, and of the death and ending of the said Arthur; affirming that I ought rather to imprint his acts and noble feats, than of Godfrey of Boloine, or any of the other eight, considering that he was a man born within this realm, and king and emperor of the same: and that there be in French divers and many noble volumes of his acts, and also of his knights. To whom I answered that divers men hold opinion that there was no such Arthur, and that all such books as been made of him be feigned and fables, because that some chronicles make of him no mention, nor remember him nothing, nor of his knights. Whereto they answered, and one in special said, that in him that should say or think that there was never such a king called Arthur might well be arretted great folly and blindness. For he said that there were many evidences of the contrary. First ye may see his sepulchre in the monastery of Glastonbury.^o And also in Policronicon,^o in the fifth book the sixth chapter, and in the seventh book the twenty-third chapter, where his body was buried, and after found, and translated into the said monastery. Ye shall see also in the history of Bochas,^o in his book *De Casu Principum*, part of his noble acts, and also of his fall. Also Galfridus^o

in his British book recounteth his life: and in divers places of England many remembrances be yet of him, and shall remain perpetually, and also of his knights. First in the abbey of Westminster, at St. Edward's shrine, remaineth the print of his seal in red wax closed in beryl, in which is written, *Patricius Arthurus Britannie, Gallie, Germanie, Dacie, Imperator.*° Item in the castle of Dover ye may see Gawaine's skull, and Cradok's mantle°: at Winchester the Round Table: in other places Launcelot's sword and many other things. Then all these things considered, there can no man reasonably gainsay but there was a king of this land named Arthur. For in all places, Christian and heathen, he is reputed and taken for one of the nine worthy, and the first of the three Christian men. And also, he is more spoken of beyond the sea, more books made of his noble acts, than there be in England, as well in Dutch, Italian, Spanish, and Greekish, as in French. And yet of record remain in witness of him in Wales, in the town of Camelot, the great stones and the marvellous works of iron lying under the ground, and royal vaults, which divers now living have seen. Wherefore it is a marvel why he is no more renowned in his own country, save only it accordeth to the Word of God, which saith that no man is accepted for a prophet in his own country.

Then all these things aforesaid alleged, I could not well deny but that there was such a noble king named Arthur, and reputed one of the nine worthy, and first and chief of the Christian men. And many noble volumes be made of him and of his noble knights in French, which I have seen and read beyond the sea, which be not had in our maternal tongue. But in Welsh be many and also in French, and some in English but nowhere nigh all. Wherefore, such as have late been drawn out briefly into English I have after the simple conning that God hath sent to me, under the favour

and correction of all noble lords and gentlemen, enprised to imprint a book of the noble histories of the said King Arthur, and of certain of his knights, after a copy unto me delivered, which copy Sir Thomas Malorye did take out of certain books of French, and reduced it into English.^o And I, according to my copy, have done set it in imprint, to the intent that noble men may see and learn the noble acts of chivalry, the gentle and virtuous deeds that some knights used in those days, by which they came to honour, and how they that were vicious were punished and oft put to shame and rebuke ; humbly beseeching all noble lords and ladies, with all other estates of what estate or degree they been of, that shall see and read in this said book and work, that they take the good and honest acts in their remembrance, and to follow the same. Wherein they shall find many joyous and pleasant histories, and noble and renowned acts of humanity, gentleness, and chivalry. For herein may be seen noble chivalry, courtesy, humanity, friendliness, hardiness, love, friendship, cowardice, murder, hate, virtue, and sin. Do after the good and leave the evil, and it shall bring you to good fame and renown. And for to pass the time this book shall be pleasant to read in, but for to give faith and belief that all is true that is contained herein, ye be at your liberty: but all is written for our doctrine, and for to beware that we fall not to vice nor sin, but to exercise and follow virtue, by which we may come and attain to good fame and renown in this life, and after this short and transitory life to come unto everlasting bliss in heaven ; the which He grant us that reigneth in heaven, the blessed Trinity. Amen.

Then to proceed forth in this said book, which I direct unto all noble princes, lords and ladies, gentlemen or gentle-women, that desire to read or hear read of the noble and joyous history of the great conqueror and excellent king, King

Arthur, sometime king of this noble realm, then called Britain; I, William Caxton, simple person, present this book following, which I have enprised to imprint: and treateth of the noble acts, feats of arms of chivalry, prowess, hardiness, humanity, love, courtesy, and very gentleness, with many wonderful histories and adventures. And for to understand briefly the content of this volume, I have divided it into XXI Books, and every book chaptered, as hereafter shall by God's grace follow. The First Book shall treat how Uther Pendragon gat the noble conqueror King Arthur, and containeth xxviii chapters. The Second Book treateth of Balin the noble knight, and containeth xix chapters. The Third Book treateth of the marriage of King Arthur to Queen Guenever, with other matters, and containeth xv chapters. The Fourth Book, how Merlin was assotted, and of war made to King Arthur, and containeth xxix chapters. The Fifth Book treateth of the conquest of Lucius the emperor, and containeth xii chapters. The Sixth Book treateth of Sir Launcelot and Sir Lionel, and marvellous adventures, and containeth xviii chapters. The Seventh Book treateth of a noble knight called Sir Gareth, and named by Sir Kay Beaumains, and containeth xxxvi chapters.^o The Eighth Book treateth of the birth of Sir Tristram the noble knight, and of his acts, and containeth xli chapters. The Ninth Book treateth of a knight named by Sir Kay Le Cote Male Taille, and also of Sir Tristram, and containeth xliv chapters. The Tenth Book treateth of Sir Tristram, and other marvellous adventures, and containeth lxxxviii chapters. The Eleventh Book treateth of Sir Launcelot and Sir Galahad, and containeth xiv chapters. The Twelfth Book treateth of Sir Launcelot and his madness, and containeth xiv chapters. The Thirteenth Book treateth how Galahad came first to King Arthur's court, and the quest how the Sangreal was

begun, and containeth xx chapters. The Fourteenth Book treateth of the quest of the Sangreal, and containeth x chapters. The Fifteenth Book treateth of Sir Launcelot, and containeth vi chapters. The Sixteenth Book treateth of Sir Bors and Sir Lionel his brother, and containeth xvii chapters. The Seventeenth Book treateth of the Sangreal and containeth xxiii chapters. The Eighteenth Book treateth of Sir Launcelot and the queen, and containeth xxv chapters. The Nineteenth Book treateth of Queen Guenevere and Launcelot, and containeth xiii chapters. The Twentieth Book treateth of the piteous death of Arthur, and containeth xxii chapters. The Twenty-first Book treateth of his last departing, and how Sir Launcelot came to revenge his death, and containeth xiii chapters. The sum is twenty-one books, which contain the sum of five hundred and seven chapters, as more plainly shall follow hereafter.^o

LE MORTE DARTHUR

MORTE DARTHUR

BOOK I

CHAPTER I°

HOW UTHER PENDRAGON SENT FOR THE DUKE OF CORNWALL
AND IGRAINE HIS WIFE, AND OF THEIR DEPARTING SUDDENLY
AGAIN

IT befell in the days of Uther Pendragon,° when he was king of all England, and so reigned, that there was a mighty duke in Cornwall that held war against him long time. And the duke was called the Duke of Tintagil.° And so by means King Uther sent for this duke, charging him to bring his wife 5 with him, for she was called a fair lady, and a passing wise, and her name was called Igraine.°

So when the duke and his wife were come unto the king, by the means of great lords they were accorded both. The king liked and loved this lady well, and he made them great 10 cheer out of measure. And then she told the duke her husband, and said, I suppose that we were sent for that I should be dishonoured; wherefore, husband, I counsel you, that we depart from hence suddenly, that we may ride all night unto our own castle. And in like wise as she said so they departed, 15 that neither the king nor none of his council were ware of their departing. All so soon as King Uther knew of their

departing so suddenly, he was wonderly wroth. Then he called to him his privy council, and told them of the sudden departing of the duke and his wife.

Then they advised the king to send for the duke and his wife by a great charge; and if he will not come at your summons, then may ye do your best, then have ye cause to make mighty war upon him. So that was done, and the messengers had their answers; and that was this shortly, that neither he nor his wife would not come at him.

Then was the king wonderly wroth. And then the king sent him plain word again, and bade him be ready and stuff him and garnish him, for within forty days he would fetch him out of the biggest castle that he hath.^o

When the duke had this warning, anon he went and furnished and garnished two strong castles of his, of the which the one hight Tintagil, and the other castle hight Terrabil.^o So his wife Dame Igraine he put in the castle of Tintagil, and himself he put in the castle of Terrabil, the which had many issues and posterns out. Then in all haste came Uther with a great host, and laid a siege about the castle of Terrabil. And there he pight many pavilions, and there was great war made on both parties, and much people slain. Then for pure anger and for great love of fair Igraine the king Uther fell sick. So came to the king Uther Sir Ulfius,^o a noble knight, and asked the king why he was sick. I shall tell thee, said the king, I am sick for anger and for love of fair Igraine, that I may not be whole. Well, my lord, said Sir Ulfius, I shall seek Merlin,^o and he shall do you remedy, that your heart shall be pleased. So Ulfius departed, and by adventure he met Merlin in a beggar's array, and there Merlin asked Ulfius whom he sought. And he said he had little ado to tell him. Well, said Merlin, I know whom thou seekest, for thou seekest Merlin; therefore seek no farther, for I am he; and if

King Uther will well reward me, and be sworn unto me to fulfil my desire, that shall be his honour and profit more than mine; for I shall cause him to have all his desire. All this will I undertake, said Ulfius, that there shall be nothing reasonable but thou shalt have thy desire. Well, said Merlin, he shall have his intent and desire. And therefore, said Merlin, ride on your way, for I will not be long behind.

CHAPTER II

HOW UTHER PENDRAGON MADE WAR ON THE DUKE OF CORNWALL

THEN Ulfius was glad, and rode on more than a pace till that he came to King Uther Pendragon, and told him he had met with Merlin. Where is he? said the king. Sir, said Ulfius, he will not dwell long. Therewithal Ulfius was ware where Merlin stood at the porch of the pavilion's door. And then Merlin was bound to come to the king. When King Uther saw him, he said he was welcome. Sir, said Merlin, I know all your heart every deal; so ye will be sworn unto me as ye be a true king anointed, to fulfil my desire, ye shall have your desire: Then the king was sworn upon the Four Evangelists.° But the duke of Tintagil espied how the king rode from the siege of Terrabil, and therefore that night he issued out of the castle at a postern for to have distressed the king's host. And so, through his own issue, the duke himself was slain or ever the king came at the castle of Tintagil.

So after the death of the duke, and on day came Merlin to the king, and bade him make him ready, and so he kissed the lady Igraine and departed in all haste. But when the lady heard tell of the duke her husband, and by all record he was

dead or ever King Uther came to her, then she marvelled who that might be that came to her in likeness of her lord; so she mourned privily and held her peace. Then all the barons by one assent prayed the king of accord betwixt the 5 lady Igraine and him; the king gave them leave, for fain would he have been accorded with her. So the king put all the trust in Ulfius to entreat between them, so by the entreaty at the last the king and she met together. Now will we do well, said Ulfius, our king is a lusty knight and wife- 10 less, and my lady Igraine is a passing fair lady; it were great joy unto us all, an it might please the king to make her his queen. Unto that they all well accorded and moved it to the king. And anon, like a lusty knight, he assented thereto with good will, and so in all haste they were married in a 15 morning with great mirth and joy.

And King Lot of Lothian and of Orkney^o then wedded Margawse^o that was Gawaine's mother, and King Nentres of the land of Garlot wedded Elaine.^o All this was done at the request of King Uther. And the third sister Morgan 20 le Fay^o was put to school in a nunnery, and there she learned so much that she was a great clerk of necromancy. And after she was wedded to King Uriens of the land of Gore,^o that was Sir Ewain's le Blanchemain's father.

CHAPTER III

OF THE BIRTH OF KING ARTHUR AND OF HIS NURTURE

SOON came Merlin unto the king, and said, Sir, ye must 25 purvey you for the nourishing of your child. As thou wilt, said the king, be it. Well, said Merlin, I know a lord of yours in this land, that is a passing true man and a faithful, and he

shall have the nourishing of your child, and his name is Sir Ector,^o and he is a lord of fair livelihood in many parts in England and Wales ; and this lord, Sir Ector, let him be sent for, for to come and speak with you, and desire him yourself, as he loveth you, that he will put his own child to 5 nourishing to another woman, and that his wife nourish yours. And when the child is born let it be delivered to me at yonder privy postern unchristened. So like as Merlin devised it was done. And when Sir Ector was come he made fiaunce to the king for to nourish the child like as the king desired ;¹⁰ and there the king granted Sir Ector great rewards. Then when the lady was delivered, the king commanded two knights and two ladies to take the child, bound in a cloth of gold, and that ye deliver him to what poor man ye meet at the postern gate of the castle. So the child was delivered¹⁵ unto Merlin, and so he bare it forth unto Sir Ector, and made an holy man to christen him, and named him Arthur ; and so Sir Ector's wife nourished him.

CHAPTER IV

OF THE DEATH OF KING UTHER PENDRAGON

THEN within two years King Uther fell sick of a great malady. And in the meanwhile his enemies usurped upon²⁰ him, and did a great battle upon his men, and slew many of his people. Sir, said Merlin, ye may not lie so as ye do, for ye must to the field though ye ride on an horse-litter : for ye shall never have the better of your enemies but if your person be there, and then shall ye have the victory.²⁵ So it was done as Merlin had devised, and they carried the king forth in an horse-litter with a great host towards his

enemies. And at St. Albans there met with the king a great host of the North.^o And that day Sir Ulfius and Sir Brastias did great deeds of arms, and King Uther's men overcame the Northern battle and slew many people, and put
5 the remnant to flight. And then the king returned unto London, and made great joy of his victory. And then he fell passing sore sick, so that three days and three nights he was speechless: wherefore all the barons made great sorrow, and asked Merlin what counsel were best. There is none
10 other remedy, said Merlin, but God will have his will. But look ye all barons be before King Uther to-morn, and God and I shall make him to speak. So on the morn all the barons with Merlin came to-fore the king; then Merlin said aloud unto King Uther, Sir, shall your son Arthur be king after
15 your days, of this realm with all the appurtenance? Then Uther Pendragon turned him, and said in hearing of them all, I give him God's blessing and mine, and bid him pray for my soul, and righteously and worshipfully that he claim the crown, upon forfeiture of my blessing^o; and therewith he
20 yielded up the ghost, and then was he interred as longed to a king. Wherefore the queen, fair Igraine, made great sorrow, and all the barons.

CHAPTER V

HOW ARTHUR WAS CHOSEN KING, AND OF WONDERS AND MAR-
VELS OF A SWORD TAKEN OUT OF A STONE BY THE SAID
ARTHUR

THEN stood the realm in great jeopardy long while, for every lord that was mighty of men made him strong, and many
25 weened to have been king. Then Merlin went to the Arch-

bishop of Canterbury,^o and counselled him for to send for all the lords of the realm, and all the gentlemen of arms, that they should to London come by Christmas, upon pain of cursing^o; and for this cause, that Jesus, that was born on that night, that he wold of his great mercy show some miracle,^o as he was come to be king of mankind, for to show some miracle who should be rightwise king of this realm. So the Archbishop, by the advice of Merlin, sent for all the lords and gentlemen of arms that they should come by Christmas even unto London. And many of them made them clean of their ¹⁰ life, that their prayer might be the more acceptable unto God. So in the greatest church of London, whether it were Paul's^o or not the French book maketh no mention, all the estates were long or day in the church for to pray. And when matins and the first mass was done, there was seen in the churchyard, ¹⁵ against the high altar, a great stone four square, like unto a marble stone; and in midst thereof was like an anvil of steel a foot on high, and therein stuck a fair sword naked by the point, and letters there were written in gold about the sword that said thus:— Whoso pulleth out this sword of this ²⁰ stone and anvil, is rightwise king born of all England. Then the peopel marvelled, and told it to the Archbishop. I command, said the Archbishop, that ye keep you within your church and pray unto God still, that no man touch the sword till the high mass be all done. So when all masses were done ²⁵ all the lords went to behold the stone and the sword. And when they saw the scripture^o some assayed, such as would have been king. But none might stir the sword nor move it. He is not here, said the Archbishop, that shall achieve the sword, but doubt not God will make him known. But this ³⁰ is my counsel, said the Archbishop, that we let purvey ten knights, men of good fame, and they to keep this sword. So it was ordained, and then there was made a cry, that every

man should assay that would, for to win the sword. And upon New Year's Day the barons let make a jousts and a tournament, that all knights that would joust or tourney there might play, and all this was ordained for to keep the 5 lords together and the commons, for the Archbishop trusted that God would make him known that should win the sword.

So upon New Year's Day, when the service was done, the barons rode unto the field, some to joust and some to tourney, and so it happened that Sir Ector, that had great livelihood 10 about London, rode unto the jousts, and with him rode Sir Kay his son, and young Arthur that was his nourished brother; and Sir Kay was made knight at All Hallowmass afore. So as they rode to the jousts-ward, Sir Kay lost his sword, for he had left it at his father's lodging, and so he prayed young 15 Arthur for to ride for his sword. I will well, said Arthur, and rode fast after the sword, and when he came home, the lady and all were out to see the jousting. Then was Arthur wroth, and said to himself, I will ride to the churchyard, and take the sword with me that sticketh in the stone, for my 20 brother Sir Kay shall not be without a sword this day. So when he came to the churchyard, Sir Arthur^o alighted and tied his horse to the stile, and so he went to the tent, and found no knights there, for they were at the jousting. And so he handled the sword by the handles, and lightly and 25 fiercely pulled it out of the stone, and took his horse and rode his way until he came to his brother Sir Kay, and delivered him the sword. And as soon as Sir Kay saw the sword, he wist well it was the sword of the stone, and so he rode to his father Sir Ector, and said: Sir, lo here is the sword of 30 the stone, wherefore I must be king of this land.^o When Sir Ector beheld the sword, he returned again and came to the church, and there they alighted all three, and went into the church. And anon he made Sir Kay swear upon a book

how he came to that sword. Sir, said Sir Kay, by my brother Arthur, for he brought it to me. How gat ye this sword? said Sir Ector to Arthur. Sir, I will tell you. When I came home for my brother's sword, I found nobody at home to deliver me his sword; and so I thought my brother Sir Kay ⁵ should not be swordless, and so I came hither eagerly and pulled it out of the stone without any pain. Found ye any knights about this sword? said Sir Ector. Nay, said Arthur. Now, said Sir Ector to Arthur, I understand ye must be king of this land. Wherefore I, said Arthur, and for what cause? ¹⁰ Sir, said Ector, for God will have it so; for there should never man have drawn out this sword, but he that shall be rightwise king of this land. Now let me see whether ye can put the sword there as it was, and pull it out again. That is no mastery, said Arthur, and so he put it in the stone; where- ¹⁵ withal Sir Ector assayed to pull out the sword and failed.

CHAPTER VI

HOW KING ARTHUR PULLED OUT THE SWORD DIVERS TIMES

Now assay, said Sir Ector unto Sir Kay. And anon he pulled at the sword with all his might; but it would not be. Now shall ye assay, said Sir Ector to Arthur. I will well, said Arthur, and pulled it out easily. And therewithal Sir ²⁰ Ector knelt down to the earth, and Sir Kay. Alas, said Arthur, my own dear father and brother, why kneel ye to me? Nay, nay, my lord Arthur, it is not so; I was never your father nor of your blood, but I wot well ye are of an higher blood than I weened ye were. And then Sir Ector ²⁵ told him all, how he was betaken him for to nourish him, and by whose commandment, and by Merlin's deliverance.

Then Arthur made great dole when he understood that Sir Ector was not his father. Sir, said Ector unto Arthur, will ye be my good and gracious lord when ye are king? Else were I to blame, said Arthur, for ye are the man in the 5 world that I am most beholden to, and my good lady and mother your wife, that as well as her own hath fostered me and kept. And if ever it be God's will that I be king as ye say, ye shall desire of me what I may do, and I shall not fail you; God forbid I should fail you. Sir, said Sir Ector, I 10 will ask no more of you, but that ye will make my son, your foster brother, Sir Kay, seneschal^o of all your lands. That shall be done, said Arthur, and more, by the faith of my body, that never man shall have that office but he, while he and I live. Therewithal they went unto the Archbishop, and told 15 him how the sword was achieved, and by whom; and on Twelfth-day^o all the barons came thither, and to assay to take the sword, who that would assay. But there afore them all, there might none take it out but Arthur; wherefore there were many lords wroth, and said it was great shame 20 unto them all and the realm, to be overgoverned with a boy of no high blood born. And so they fell out at that time that it was put off till Candlemas, and then all the barons should meet there again; but always the ten knights were ordained to watch the sword day and night, and so they set 25 a pavilion over the stone and the sword, and five always watched. So at Candlemas many more great lords came thither for to have won the sword, but there might none prevail. And right as Arthur did at Christmas, he did at Candlemas, and pulled out the sword easily, whereof the barons were 30 sore aggrieved and put it off in delay till the high feast of Easter. And as Arthur sped before, so did he at Easter; yet there were some of the great lords had indignation that Arthur should be king, and put it off in a delay till the feast of Pentecost.

Then the Archbishop of Canterbury by Merlin's providence let purvey^o then of the best knights that they might get, and such knights as Uther Pendragon loved best and most trusted in his days. And such knights were put about Arthur as Sir Baudwin of Britain,^o Sir Kay, Sir Ulfius, Sir Brastias.^o 5 All these, with many other, were always about Arthur, day and night, till the feast of Pentecost.

CHAPTER VII

HOW KING ARTHUR WAS CROWNED, AND HOW HE MADE OFFICERS

AND at the feast of Pentecost^o all manner of men assayed to pull at the sword that would assay; but none might prevail but Arthur, and pulled it out afore all the lords and commons that were there, wherefore all the commons^o cried at once, We will have Arthur unto our king, we will put him no more in delay, for we all see that it is God's will that he shall be our king, and who that holdeth against it, we will slay him. And therewithal they kneeled at once, both rich 15 and poor, and cried Arthur mercy because they had delayed him so long, and Arthur forgave them, and took the sword between both his hands, and offered it upon the altar where the Archbishop was, and so was he made knight of the best man that was there. And so anon was the coronation made.^o 20 And there was he sworn unto his lords and the commons for to be a true king, to stand with true justice from thenceforth the days of this life. Also then he made all lords that held of the crown to come in, and to do service as they ought to do.^o And many complaints were made unto Sir Arthur of 25 great wrongs that were done since the death of King Uther, of many lands that were bereaved lords, knights, ladies, and

gentlemen. Wherefore King Arthur made the lands to be given again unto them that owned them.

When this was done, that the king had stablished all the countries about London, then he let make Sir Kay seneschal of England; and Sir Baudwin of Britain was made constable; and Sir Ulfius was made chamberlain; and Sir Brastias was made warden to wait upon the north from Trent forwards, for it was that time the most party the king's enemies. But within few years after Arthur won all the north,° Scotland, 10 and all that were under their obeissance. Also Wales,° a part of it, held against Arthur, but he overcame them all, as he did the remnant, through the noble prowess of himself and his knights of the Round Table.°

CHAPTER VIII

HOW KING ARTHUR HELD IN WALES, AT A PENTECOST, A GREAT FEAST, AND WHAT KINGS AND LORDS CAME TO HIS FEAST

THEN the king removed into Wales, and let cry a great 15 feast that it should be holden at Pentecost after the incoronation of him at the city of Carlion.° Unto the feast came King Lot of Lothian and of Orkney with five hundred knights with him. Also there came to the feast King Uriens of Gore with four hundred knights with him. Also there came to 20 that feast King Nentres of Garlot with seven hundred knights with him. Also there came to the feast the king of Scotland with six hundred knights with him, and he was but a young man. Also there came to the feast a king that was called the King with the Hundred Knights,° but he and his men were 25 passing well beseen at all points. Also there came the king of Carados° with five hundred knights. And King Arthur

was glad of their coming, for he weened that all the kings and knights had come for great love, and to have done him worship at his feast; wherefore the king made great joy, and sent the kings and knights great presents. But the kings would none receive, but rebuked the messengers shamefully, 5 and said they had no joy to receive no gifts^o of a beardless boy that was come of low blood, and sent him word they would none of his gifts, but that they were come to give him gifts with hard swords betwixt the neck and the shoulders: and therefore they came thither, so they told to the messengers 10 plainly, for it was great shame to all them to see such a boy to have a rule of so noble a realm as this land was. With this answer the messengers departed and told to King Arthur this answer. Wherefore, by the advice of his barons, he took him to a strong tower with five hundred good men with him. 15 And all the kings aforesaid in a manner laid a siege to-fore him, but King Arthur was well victualled. And within fifteen days there came Merlin among them into the city of Carlion. Then all the kings were passing glad of Merlin, and asked him, For what cause is that boy Arthur made your king? 20 Sirs, said Merlin, I shall tell you the cause, for he is King Uther Pendragon's son, born in wedlock, gotten on Igraine, the duke's wife of Tintagil. Then is he a bastard, they said all. Nay, said Merlin, after the death of the duke, more than three hours, was Arthur begotten, and thirteen days after 25 King Uther wedded Igraine; and therefore I prove him he is no bastard. And who saith nay,^o he shall be king and overcome all his enemies; and, or he die, he shall be long king of all England, and have under his obeissance Wales, Ireland, and Scotland, and more realms than I will now rehearse.^o 30 Some of the kings had marvel of Merlin's words, and deemed well that it should be as he said; and some of them laughed him to scorn, as King Lot; and more other called him a

witch.^o But then were they accorded with Merlin, that King Arthur should come out and speak with the kings, and to come safe and to go safe, such surance there was made. So Merlin went unto King Arthur, and told him how he had done, and bade him fear not, but come out boldly and speak with them, and spare them not, but answer them as their king and chieftain; for ye shall overcome them all, whether they will or nill.

CHAPTER IX

OF THE FIRST WAR THAT KING ARTHUR HAD, AND HOW HE WON THE FIELD

THEN King Arthur came out of his tower, and had under his gown a jesseraunt of double mail, and there went with him the Archbischop of Canterbury, and Sir Baudwin of Britain, and Sir Kay, and Sir Brastias: these were the men of most worship that were with him. And when they were met there was no meekness, but stout words on both sides; but always King Arthur answered them, and said he would make them to bow an he lived. Wherefore they departed with wrath, and King Arthur bade keep them well, and they bade the king keep him well. So the king returned him to the tower again and armed him and all his knights. What will ye do? said Merlin to the kings; ye were better for to stint, for ye shall not here prevail though ye were ten times so many. Be we well advised to be afeared of a dream-reader? said King Lot. With that Merlin vanished away, and came to King Arthur, and bade him set on them fiercely; and in the meanwhile there were three hundred good men, of the best that were with the kings, that went straight unto King Arthur, and that comforted him greatly. Sir, said

Merlin to Arthur, fight not with the sword that ye had by miracle,^o till that ye see ye go unto the worse, then draw it out and do your best. So forthwithal King Arthur set upon them in their lodging. And Sir Baudwin, Sir Kay, and Sir Brastias slew on the right hand and on the left hand that 5 it was marvel; and always King Arthur on horseback laid on with a sword, and did marvellous deeds of arms, that many of the kings had great joy of his deeds and hardiness.^o

Then King Lot brake out on the back side, and the King with the Hundred Knights, and King Carados, and set on 10 Arthur fiercely behind him. With that Sir Arthur turned with his knights, and smote behind and before, and even Sir Arthur was in the foremost press till his horse was slain underneath him. And therewith King Lot smote down King Arthur. With that his four knights received him and 15 set him on horseback. Then he drew his sword Excalibur, but it was so bright in his enemies' eyes, that it gave light like thirty torches. And therewith he put them a-back, and slew much people. And then the commons of Carlion arose with clubs and staves, and slew many knights; but all the kings 20 held them together with their knights that were left alive, and so fled and departed. And Merlin came unto Arthur, and counselled him to follow them no further.

CHAPTER XVIII

HOW KING ARTHUR, KING BAN, AND KING BORS RESCUED KING LEODEGRANCE, AND OTHER INCIDENTS

AND then King Arthur, and King Ban, and King Bors departed with their fellowship, a twenty thousand, and 25 came within six days into the country of Cameliard, and there

rescued King Leodegrance,^o and slew there much people of King Rience, unto the number of ten thousand men, and put him to flight. And then had these three kings great cheer of King Leodegrance, that thanked them of their great goodness, that they would revenge him of his enemies; and there had Arthur the first sight of Guenever, the king's daughter of Cameliard, and ever after he loved her.^o After they were wedded, as it telleth in the book. So, briefly to make an end, they took their leave to go into their own countries, for 5 King Claudas did great destruction on their lands. Then said Arthur, I will go with you. Nay, said the kings, ye shall not at this time, for ye have much to do yet in these lands, therefore we will depart, and with the great goods that we have gotten in these lands by your gifts, we shall wage good 10 15 knights^o and withstand the King Claudas' malice, for by the grace of God, an we have need we will send to you for your succour; and if ye have need, send for us, and we will not tarry, by the faith of our bodies. It shall not, said Merlin, need that these two kings come again in the way of war, but 20 25 I know well King Arthur may not be long from you, for within a year or two ye shall have great need, and then shall he revenge you on your enemies, as ye have done on his. For these eleven kings shall die all in a day, by the great might and prowess of arms of two valiant knights (as it telleth after); their names be Balin le Savage, and Balan,^o his brother, that be marvellous good knights as be any living.

Now turn we to the eleven kings that returned unto a city that hight Sorhaute, the which city was within King Uriens', and there they refreshed them as well as they might, and made 30 leeches search their wounds, and sorrowed greatly for the death of their people. With that there came a messenger and told how there was come into their lands people that were lawless as well as Saracens,^o a forty thousand, and have burnt

and slain all the people that they may come by, without mercy, and have laid siege on the castle of Wandesborow. Alas, said the eleven kings, here is sorrow upon sorrow, and if we had not warred against Arthur as we have done, he would soon revenge us. As for King Leodegrance, he loveth Arthur better than us, and as for King Rience, he hath enough to do with Leodegrance, for he hath laid siege unto him. So they consented together to keep all the marches of Cornwall, of Wales, and of the North. So first, they put King Idres in the City of Nauntes in Britain,^o with four thousand men of arms, to watch both the water and the land. Also then put in the city of Windesan, King Nentres of Garlot, with four thousand knights to watch both on water and on land. Also they had of other men of war more than eight thousand, for to fortify all the fortresses in the marches of Cornwall.¹⁵ Also they put more knights in all the marches of Wales and Scotland, with many good men of arms, and so they kept them together the space of three year, and ever allied them with mighty kings and dukes and lords. And to them fell King Rience of North Wales, the which was a mighty man of men, and Nero^o that was a mighty man of men. And all this while they furnished them and garnished them of good men of arms, and victual, and of all manner of habiliment that pretendeth to the war, to avenge them for the battle of Bedegraine,^o as it telleth in the book of adventures following.²⁵

CHAPTER XIX

HOW KING ARTHUR RODE TO CARLION, AND OF HIS DREAM,
AND HOW HE SAW THE QUESTING BEAST

THEN after the departing of King Ban and of King Bors, King Arthur rode into Carlion. And thither came to him,

King Lot's wife, of Orkney, in manner of a message, but she was sent thither to espy the court of King Arthur ; and she came richly beseen, with her four sons, Gawaine, Gaheris, Agravaine, and Gareth,° with many other knights and ladies.

5 For she was a passing fair lady, therefore the king cast great love unto her, and he begat upon her Mordred, and she was his sister, on his mother's side, Igraine.° So there she rested her a month, and at the last departed. Then the king dreamed a marvellous dream whereof he was sore adread.

10 But all this time King Arthur knew not that King Lot's wife was his sister. Thus was the dream of Arthur : Him thought there was come into this land griffins and serpents, and him thought they burnt and slew all the people in the land, and then him thought° he fought with them, and they did him 15 passing great harm, and wounded him full sore, but at the last he slew them. When the king awaked, he was passing heavy of his dream, and so to put it out of thoughts, he made him ready with many knights to ride a-hunting. As soon as he was in the forest the king saw a great hart afore him.

20 This hart will I chase, said King Arthur, and so he spurred the horse, and rode after long, and so by fine force oft he was like to have smitten the hart ; whereas the king had chased the hart so long, that his horse lost his breath, and fell down dead. Then a yeoman fetched the king another 25 horse.

So the king saw the hart enbushed, and his horse dead, he set him down by a fountain, and there he fell in great thoughts. And as he sat so, him thought he heard a noise of hounds, to the sum of thirty. And with that the king 30 saw coming toward him the strangest beast that ever he saw or heard of ; so the beast went to the well and drank, and the noise was in the beast's belly like unto the questing of thirty couple hounds ; but all the while the beast drank

there was no noise in the beast's belly: and therewith the beast departed with a great noise, whereof the king had great marvel. And so he was in a great thought, and therewith he fell asleep. Right so there came a knight afoot unto Arthur and said, Knight full of thought and sleepy, tell me 5 if thou sawest a strange beast pass this way. Such one saw I, said King Arthur, that is past two mile; what would ye with the beast? said Arthur. Sir, I have followed that beast long time, and killed mine horse, so would God I had another to follow my quest. Right so came one with the 10 king's horse, and when the knight saw the horse, he prayed the king to give him the horse: for I have followed this quest this twelvemonth, and either I shall achieve him, or bleed of the best blood of my body. Pellinore, that time king, followed the Questing Beast, and after his death Sir 15 Palamides followed it.^o

CHAPTER XX

HOW KING PELLINORE TOOK ARTHUR'S HORSE AND FOLLOWED
THE QUESTING BEAST, AND HOW MERLIN MET WITH
ARTHUR

SIR knight, said the king, leave that quest, and suffer me to have it, and I will follow it another twelvemonth. Ah, fool, said the knight unto Arthur, it is in vain thy desire, for it shall never be achieved but by me, or my next kin. 20 Therewith he started unto the king's horse and mounted into the saddle, and said, Gramercy, this horse is my own. Well, said the king, thou mayst take my horse by force, but an I might prove thee whether thou were better on horseback or I. — Well, said the knight, seek me here when 25 thou wilt, and here nigh this well thou shalt find me, and so

passed on his way. Then the king sat in a study, and bade his men fetch his horse as fast as ever they might. Right so came by him Merlin like a child^o of fourteen year of age, and saluted the king, and asked him why he was so pensive.

5 I may well be pensive, said the king, for I have seen the marvelllest sight that ever I saw. That know I well, said Merlin, as well as thyself, and of all thy thoughts, but thou art but a fool to take thought, for it will not amend thee. Also I know what thou art, and who was thy father, and of

10 whom thou wert begotten; King Uther Pendragon was thy father, and begat thee on Igraine. That is false, said King Arthur, how shouldest thou know it, for thou art not so old of years to know my father? Yes, said Merlin, I know it better than ye or any man living. I will not believe thee,

15 said Arthur, and was wroth with the child. So departed Merlin, and came again in the likeness of an old man of four-score year of age, whereof the king was right glad, for he seemed to be right wise.

Then said the old man, Why are ye so sad? I may well be heavy, said Arthur, for many things. Also here was a child, and told me many things that meseemeth he should not know, for he was not of age to know my father. Yes, said the old man, the child told you truth, and more would he have told you an ye would have suffered him. But ye

25 have done a thing late that God is displeased with you, for ye have gotten a child that shall destroy you and all the knights of your realm. What are ye, said Arthur, that tell me these tidings? I am Merlin, and I was he in the child's likeness. Ah, said King Arthur, ye are a marvellous man,

30 but I marvel much of thy words that I must die in battle.

Marvel not, said Merlin, for it is God's will your body to be punished for your foul deeds; but I may well be sorry, said Merlin, for I shall die a shameful death, to be put in the earth

quick,° and ye shall die a worshipful death. And as they talked this, came one with the king's horse, and so the king mounted on his horse, and Merlin on another, and so rode unto Carlion. And anon the king asked Ector and Ulfius how he was begotten, and they told him Uther Pendragon was his 5 father and Queen Igraine his mother. Then he said to Merlin, I will that my mother be sent for, that I may speak with her ; and if she say so herself, then will I believe it. In all haste, the queen was sent for, and she came and brought with her Morgan le Fay, her daughter, that was as fair a lady 10 as any might be, and the king welcomed Igraine in the best manner.

CHAPTER XXI

HOW ULFIUS IMPEACHED QUEEN IGRAGINE, ARTHUR'S MOTHER, OF TREASON ; AND HOW A KNIGHT CAME AND DESIRED TO HAVE THE DEATH OF HIS MASTER REVENGED

RIGHT so came Ulfius, and said openly, that the king and all might hear that were feasted that day, Ye are the falsest lady of the world, and the most traitress unto the 15 king's person. Beware, said Arthur, what thou sayest ; thou speakest a great word. I am well ware, said Ulfius, what I speak, and here is my glove° to prove it upon any man that will say the contrary, that this Queen Igraine is causer of your great damage, and of your great war. For, 20 an she would have uttered it in the life of King Uther Pendragon, of the birth of you, and how ye were begotten, ye had never had the mortal wars that ye have had ; for the most part of your barons of your realm knew never whose son ye were, nor of whom ye were begotten ; and she that 25 bare you of her body should have made it known openly in

excusing of her worship and yours, and in like wise to all the realm, wherefore I prove her false to God and to you and to all your realm, and who will say the contrary I will prove it on his body.

5 Then spake Igraine and said, I am a woman and I may not fight, but rather than I should be dishonoured, there would some good man take my quarrel. More, she said, Merlin knoweth well, and ye Sir Ulfius, how King Uther came to me in the Castle of Tintagil in the likeness of my 10 lord, that was dead three hours to-fore, and thereby gat a child that night upon me. And after the thirteenth day King Uther wedded me, and by his commandment when the child was born it was delivered unto Merlin and nourished by him, and so I saw the child never after, nor wot not what is 15 his name, for I knew him never yet. And there, Ulfius said to the queen, Merlin is more to blame than ye.^o Well I wot, said the queen, I bare a child by my lord King Uther, but I wot not where he is become. Then Merlin took the king by the hand, saying, This is your mother. And therewith Sir 20 Ector bare witness how he nourished him by Uther's commandment. And therewith King Arthur took his mother, Queen Igraine, in his arms and kissed her, and either wept upon other. And then the king let make a feast that lasted eight days.^o

CHAPTER XXV

HOW ARTHUR BY THE MEAN OF MERLIN GAT EXCALIBUR, HIS
SWORD OF THE LADY OF THE LAKE

25 RIGHT so the king and he departed, and went unto an hermit that was a good man and a great leech. So the hermit searched all his wounds and gave him good salves; so the

king was there three days, and then were his wounds well amended that he might ride and go,° and so departed. And as they rode, Arthur said, I have no sword. No force, said Merlin, hereby is a sword that shall be yours, an I may. So they rode till they came to a lake, the which was a fair 5 water and broad, and in the midst of the lake Arthur was ware of an arm clothed in white samite, that held a fair sword in that hand. Lo ! said Merlin, yonder is that sword that I spake of. With that they saw a damosel going upon the lake. What damosel is that ? said Arthur. That is the Lady of 10 the Lake,° said Merlin ; and within that lake is a rock, and therein is as fair a place as any on earth, and richly beseen ; and this damosel will come to you anon, and then speak ye fair to her that she will give you that sword. Anon withal came the damosel unto Arthur, and saluted him, and he her 15 again. Damosel, said Arthur, what sword is that, that yonder the arm holdeth above the water ? I would it were mine, for I have no sword. Sir Arthur, king, said the damosel, that sword is mine, and if ye will give me a gift when I ask it you, ye shall have it. By my faith, said Arthur, I will 20 give you what gift ye will ask. Well ! said the damosel, go ye into yonder barge, and row yourself to the sword, and take it and the scabbard with you, and I will ask my gift when I see my time.° So Sir Arthur and Merlin alighted and tied their horses to two trees, and so they went into the ship, 25 and when they came to the sword that the hand held, Sir Arthur took it up by the handles, and took it with him,° and the arm and the hand went under the water. And so [they] came unto the land and rode forth, and then Sir Arthur saw a rich pavilion. What signifieth yonder pavilion ? 30 It is the knight's pavilion, said Merlin, that ye fought with last, Sir Pellinore°; but he is out, he is not there. He hath ado with a knight of yours that hight Egglame, and they have

foughten together, but at the last Egglaume fled, and else he had been dead, and he hath chased him even to Carlion, and we shall meet with him anon in the highway. That is well said, said Arthur, now have I a sword, now will I wage battle
5 with him, and be avenged on him. Sir, you shall not so, said Merlin, for the knight is weary of fighting and chasing, so that ye shall have no worship to have ado with him ; also he will not be lightly matched of one knight living, and therefore it is my counsel, let him pass, for he shall do you
10 good service in short time, and his sons after his days. Also ye shall see that day in short space, you shall be right glad to give him your sister to wed. When I see him, I will do as ye advise, said Arthur.

Then Sir Arthur looked on the sword, and liked it passing
15 well. Whether liketh you better, said Merlin, the sword or the scabbard ? Me liketh better the sword, said Arthur. Ye are more unwise, said Merlin, for the scabbard is worth ten of the swords, for whiles ye have the scabbard upon you, ye shall never lose no blood, be ye never so sore wounded ;
20 therefore keep well the scabbard always with you. So they rode unto Carlion, and by the way they met with Sir Pellinore ; but Merlin had done such a craft, that Pellinore saw not Arthur, and he passed by without any words. I marvel, said Arthur, that the knight would not speak. Sir, said
25 Merlin, he saw you not, for an he had seen you, ye had not lightly departed. So they came unto Carlion, whereof his knights were passing glad. And when they heard of his adventures, they marvelled that he would jeopard his person so, alone. But all men of worship said it was merry to be under
30 such a chieftain, that would put his person in adventure as other poor knights did.^o

BOOK III

CHAPTER I

HOW KING ARTHUR TOOK A WIFE, AND WEDDED GUENEVER,
DAUGHTER TO LEODEGRANCE, KING OF THE LAND OF CAME-
LIARD, WITH WHOM HE HAD THE ROUND TABLE

IN the beginning^o of Arthur, after he was chosen king by adventure and by grace; for the most part of the barons knew not that he was Uther Pendragon's son, but as Merlin made it openly known. But yet many kings and lords held great war against him for that cause,^o but well Arthur over- 5 came them all, for the most part the days of his life he was ruled much by the counsel of Merlin. So it fell on a time King Arthur said unto Merlin, My barons will let me have no rest, but needs I must take a wife, and I will none take but by thy counsel and by thine advice. It is well done, said Merlin, 10 that ye take a wife, for a man of your bounty and noblesse should not be without a wife. Now is there any that ye love more than another? Yea, said King Arthur, I love Guenever the king's daughter, Leodegrance of the land of Cameliard, the which holdeth in his house the Table Round^o that ye told 15 he had of my father Uther. And this damosel is the most valiant and fairest lady that I know living, or yet that ever I could find. Sir, said Merlin, as of her beauty and fairness she is one of the fairest alive, but, an ye loved her not so well as ye do, I should find you a damosel of beauty and of good- 20

ness that should like you^o and please you, an your heart were not set ; but there as a man's heart is set, he will be loath to return. That is truth, said King Arthur. But Merlin warned the king covertly that Guenever was not wholesome for him to take to wife, for he warned him that Launcelot should love her,^o and she him again ; and so he turned his tale to the adventures of Sangreal.^o

Then Merlin desired of the king for to have men with him that should enquire of Guenever, and so the king granted him, and Merlin went forth unto King Leodegrance of Cameliard, and told him of the desire of the king that he would have unto his wife Guenever his daughter. That is to me, said King Leodegrance, the best tidings that ever I heard, that so worthy a king of prowess and noblesse will wed my daughter.^o

15 And as for my lands, I will give him, wist I it might please him, but he hath lands enow, him needeth none ; but I shall send him a gift shall please him much more, for I shall give him the Table Round, the which Uther Pendragon gave me, and when it is full complete, there is an hundred knights and

20 fifty. And as for an hundred good knights I have myself, but I faute fifty, for so many have been slain in my days. And so Leodegrance delivered his daughter Guenever unto Merlin, and the Table Round with the hundred knights, and so they rode freshly, with great royalty, what by water

25 and what by land, till that they came nigh unto London.^o

CHAPTER II

HOW THE KNIGHTS OF THE ROUND TABLE WERE ORDAINED AND THEIR SIEGES BLESSED BY THE BISHOP OF CANTERBURY

WHEN King Arthur heard of the coming of Guenever and the hundred knights with the Table Round, then King

Arthur made great joy for her coming, and that rich present, and said openly, This fair lady is passing welcome unto me, for I have loved her long,^o and therefore there is nothing so lief to me. And these knights with the Round Table please me more than right great riches. And in all haste the king ⁵ let ordain for the marriage and the coronation in the most honourable wise that could be devised. Now, Merlin, said King Arthur, go thou and espy me in all this land fifty knights which be of most prowess and worship. Within short time Merlin had found such knights that should fulfil twenty and ¹⁰ eight knights, but no more he could find. Then the Bishop of Canterbury was fetched, and he blessed the sieges with great royalty and devotion, and there set the eight and twenty knights in their sieges. And when this was done Merlin said, Fair sirs, ye must all arise and come to King Arthur ¹⁵ for to do him homage ; he will have the better will to maintain you. And so they arose and did their homage, and when they were gone Merlin found in every sieges letters of gold that told the knights' names that had sitten therein. But two sieges were void.^o And so anon came young Gawaine ²⁰ and asked the king a gift. Ask, said the king, and I shall grant it you. Sir, I ask that ye will make me knight that same day ye shall wed fair Guenever. I will do it with a good will, said King Arthur, and do unto you all the worship that I may, for I must by reason ye are my nephew, ²⁵ my sister's son.

CHAPTER V

THEN was the high feast made ready, and the king was wedded at Camelot unto Dame Guenever in the church of St. Stephen's, with great solemnity.^o

Explicit the wedding of King Arthur

BOOK VII

CHAPTER I

HOW BEAUMAINS CAME TO KING ARTHUR'S COURT AND DEMANDED THREE PETITIONS OF KING ARTHUR

WHEN Arthur held his Round Table most plenour, it fortuned that he commanded that the high feast of Pentecost should be holden at a city and a castle, the which in those days was called Kynke Kenadonne,^o upon the sands 5 that marched nigh Wales. So ever the king had a custom that at the feast of Pentecost in especial, afore other feasts in the year, he would not go that day to meat until he had heard or seen of a great marvel.^o And for that custom all manner of strange adventures came before Arthur as at that 10 feast before all other feasts. And so Sir Gawaine, a little to-fore noon of the day of Pentecost, espied at a window three men upon horseback, and a dwarf on foot, and so the three men alighted, and the dwarf kept their horses, and one of the three men was higher than the other twain by a foot 15 and an half. Then Sir Gawaine went unto the king and said, Sir, go to your meat, for here at the hand come strange adventures. So Arthur went unto his meat with many other kings. And there were all the knights of the Round Table, [save] only those that were prisoners or slain at a recounter. 20 Then at the high feast evermore they should be fulfilled the whole number of an hundred and fifty, for then was the Round Table fully complished.^o

Right so came into the hall two men well beseen and richly, and upon their shoulders there leaned the goodliest young man and the fairest that ever they all saw, and he was large and long, and broad in the shoulders, and well visaged, and the fairest and the largest handed that every man saw, but he 5 fared as though he might not go nor bear himself but if he leaned upon their shoulders. Anon as Arthur saw him there was made peace and room, and right so they yede with him unto the high dais, without saying of any words. Then this much young man pulled him aback, and easily stretched up 10 straight, saying, King Arthur, God you bless and all your fair fellowship, and in especial the fellowship of the Table Round. And for this cause I am come hither, to pray you and require you to give me three gifts, and they shall not be unreasonably asked, but that ye may worshipfully and hon- 15 ourably grant them me, and to you no great hurt nor loss. And the first don and gift I will ask now, and the other two gifts I will ask this day twelvemonth, wheresomever ye hold your high feast. Now ask, said Arthur, and ye shall have your asking.

Now, sir, this is my petition for this feast, that ye will give me meat and drink sufficiently for this twelvemonth, and at that day I will ask mine other two gifts.

My fair son, said Arthur, ask better, I counsel thee, for this is but a simple asking; for my heart giveth me to thee 25 greatly, that thou art come of men of worship, and greatly my conceit faileth me but thou shalt prove a man of right great worship. Sir, he said, thereof be as it be may, I have asked that I will ask. Well, said the king, ye shall have meat and drink enough; I never defended that none, neither my 30 friend nor my foe. But what is thy name I would wit? I cannot tell you, said he. That is marvel, said the king, that thou knowest not thy name, and thou art the goodliest

young man that ever I saw. Then the king betook him to Sir Kay the steward, and charged him that he should give him of all manner of meats and drinks of the best, and also that he had all manner of finding as though he were a lord's son. That shall little need, said Sir Kay, to do such cost upon him; for I dare undertake he is a villain born, and never will make man, for an he had come of gentlemen he would have asked of you horse and armour, but such as he is, so he asketh. And sithen he hath no name, I shall give him a name that shall be Beaumains, that is Fair-hands, and into the kitchen I shall bring him, and there he shall have fat brose every day, that he shall be as fat by the twelve-month's end as a pork hog. Right so the two men departed and beleft him to Sir Kay, that scorned him and mocked him.

CHAPTER II

HOW SIR LAUNCELOT AND SIR GAWAINE WERE WROTH BECAUSE
SIR KAY MOCKED BEAUMAINS, AND OF A DAMOSEL WHICH
DESIRED A KNIGHT TO FIGHT FOR A LADY

THEREAT was Sir Gawaine wroth, and in especial Sir Launcelot bade Sir Kay leave his mocking, for I dare lay my head he shall prove a man of great worship.^o Let be, said Sir Kay, it may not be by no reason, for as he is, so he hath asked. Beware, said Sir Launcelot, so ye gave the good knight Brewnor, Sir Dinadan's brother, a name, and ye called him La Cote Male Taile,^o and that turned you to anger afterward. As for that, said Sir Kay, this shall never prove none such. For Sir Brewnor desired ever worship, and this desireth bread and drink and broth; upon pain of my life he was fostered up in some abbey, and, howsoever it was, they

failed meat and drink, and so hither he is come for his sustenance.

And so Sir Kay bade get him a place, and sit down to meat; so Beaumains went to the hall door, and set him down among boys and lads, and there he ate sadly. And then Sir Launcelot after meat bade him come to his chamber, and there he should have meat and drink enough. And so did Sir Gawaine^o: but he refused them all; he would do none other but as Sir Kay commanded him, for no proffer. But as touching Sir Gawaine, he had reason to proffer him ¹⁰ lodging, meat, and drink, for that proffer came of his blood, for he was nearer kin to him than he wist. But that as Sir Launcelot did was of his great gentleness and courtesy.

So thus he was put into the kitchen, and lay nightly as the boys of the kitchen did. And so he endured all that ¹⁵ twelvemonth, and never displeased man nor child, but always he was meek and mild. But ever when that he saw any jousting of knights, that would he see an he might. And ever Sir Launcelot would give him gold to spend, and clothes, and so did Sir Gawaine, and where there were any ²⁰ masteries done, thereat would he be, and there might none cast bar nor stone to him by two yards. Then would Sir Kay say, How liketh you my boy of the kitchen? So it passed on till the feast of Whitsuntide.^o And at that time the king held it at Carlion in the most royallest wise that ²⁵ might be, like as he did yearly. But the king would no meat eat upon the Whitsunday, until he heard some adventures. Then came there a squire to the king and said, Sir, ye may go to your meat, for here cometh a damosel with some strange adventures. Then was the king glad and sat him down. ³⁰

Right so there came a damosel into the hall and saluted the king, and prayed him of succour. For whom? said the king, what is the adventure?

Sir, she said, I have a lady of great worship and renown, and she is besieged with a tyrant, so that she may not out of her castle; and because here are called the noblest knights of the world, I come to you to pray you of succour. What 5 hight your lady, and where dwelleth she, and who is she, and what is his name that hath besieged her? Sir king, she said, as for my lady's name that shall not ye know for me as at this time, but I let you wit she is a lady of great worship and of great lands; and as for the tyrant that besiegeth her and 10 destroyeth her lands, he is called the Red Knight of the Red Launds. I know him not, said the king. Sir, said Sir Gawaine, I know him well, for he is one of the perilloust knights of the world; men say that he hath seven men's strength, and from him I escaped once full hard with my life. 15 Fair damosel, said the king, there be knights here would do their power for to rescue your lady, but because you will not tell her name, nor where she dwelleth, therefore none of my knights that here be now shall go with you by my will. Then must I speak further, said the damosel.

CHAPTER III

HOW BEAUMAINS DESIRED THE BATTLE, AND HOW IT WAS
GRANTED TO HIM, AND HOW HE DESIRED TO BE MADE
KNIGHT OF SIR LAUNCELOT

20 WITH these words came before the king Beaumains, while the damosel was there, and thus he said, Sir king, God thank you, I have been this twelvemonth in your kitchen, and have had my full sustenance, and now I will ask my two gifts that be behind. Ask, upon my peril, said the king. Sir, this 25 shall be my two gifts, first that ye will grant me to have this

adventure of the damosel, for it belongeth unto me. Thou shalt have it, said the king, I grant it thee. Then, sir, this is the other gift, that ye shall bid Launcelot du Lake to make me knight, for of him I will be made knight and else of none. And when I am passed I pray you let him ride after me, and 5 make me knight when I require him. All this shall be done, said the king. Fie on thee, said the damosel, shall I have none but one that is your kitchen page? Then was she wroth, and took her horse and departed. And with that there came one to Beaumains and told him his horse and armour 10 was come for him; and there was the dwarf come^o with all thing that him needed, in the richest manner; thereat all the court had much marvel from whence came all that gear. So when he was armed there was none but few so goodly a man as he was; and right so as he came into the hall and 15 took his leave of King Arthur, and Sir Gawaine, and Sir Launcelot, and prayed that he would hie after him, and so departed and rode after the damosel.

CHAPTER IV

HOW BEAUMAINS DEPARTED, AND HOW HE GAT OF SIR KAY A SPEAR AND A SHIELD, AND HOW HE JOUSTED WITH SIR LAUNCELOT

BUT there went many after to behold how well he was horsed and trapped in cloth of gold, but he had neither shield 20 nor spear. Then Sir Kay said all open in the hall, I will ride after my boy in the kitchen, to wit whether he will know me for his better. Said Sir Launcelot and Sir Gawaine, Yet abide at home. So Sir Kay made him ready and took his horse and his spear, and rode after him. And right as Beau- 25

mains overtook the damosel, right so came Sir Kay and said, Beaumains, what, sir, know ye not me? Then he turned his horse, and knew it was Sir Kay, that had done him all the despite as ye have heard afore. Yea, said Beaumains, I 5 know you for an ungentle knight of the court, and therefore beware of me. Therewith Sir Kay put his spear in the rest, and ran straight upon him; and Beaumains came as fast upon him with his sword in his hand, and so he put away his spear with his sword, and with a foin thrust him through 10 the side, that Sir Kay fell down as he had been dead; and he alighted down and took Sir Kay's shield and his spear, and stert upon his own horse and rode his way.

All that saw Sir Launcelot, and so did the damosel. And then he bade his dwarf stert upon Sir Kay's horse, and so he 15 did. By that Sir Launcelot was come, then he proffered Sir Launcelot to joust; and either made them ready, and they came together so fiercely that either bare down other to the earth, and sore were they bruised. Then Sir Launcelot arose and helped him from his horse. And then Beaumains threw 20 his shield from him, and proffered to fight with Sir Launcelot on foot; and so they rushed together like boars, tracing, racing, and foining to the mountenance of an hour; and Sir Launcelot felt him so big that he marvelled of his strength, for he fought more liker a giant than a knight, and that his 25 fighting was durable and passing perilous. For Sir Launcelot had so much ado with him that he dreaded himself to be shamed, and said, Beaumains, fight not so sore, your quarrel and mine is not so great but we may leave off. Truly that is truth, said Beaumains, but it doth me good to feel your might, 30 and yet, my lord, I showed not the utterance.

CHAPTER V

HOW BEAUMAINS TOLD TO SIR LAUNCELOT HIS NAME, AND HOW
HE WAS DUBBED KNIGHT OF SIR LAUNCELOT, AND AFTER
OVERTOOK THE DAMOSEL

IN God's name, said Sir Launcelot, for I promise you, by the faith of my body, I had as much to do as I might to save myself from you unshamed and therefore have ye no doubt of none earthly knight. Hope ye so that I may any while stand a proved knight? said Beaumains. Yea, said Launcelot, 5 do as ye have done, and I shall be your warrant. Then, I pray you, said Beaumains, give me the order of knighthood. Then must ye tell me your name, said Launcelot, and of what kin ye be born. Sir, so that ye will not discover me I shall, said Beaumains. Nay, said Sir Launcelot, and that I promise 10 to you by the faith of my body, until it be openly known. Then, sir, he said, my name is Gareth, and brother unto Sir Gawaine of father and mother. Ah, sir, said Sir Launcelot, I am more gladder of you than I was; for ever me thought ye should be of great blood, and that ye came not to the court neither for 15 meat nor for drink. And then Sir Launcelot gave him the order of knighthood, and then Sir Gareth prayed him for to depart and let him go.

So Sir Launcelot departed from him and came to Sir Kay, and made him to be borne home upon his shield, and so he 20 was healed hard with the life; and all men scorned Sir Kay, and in especial Sir Gawaine and Sir Launcelot said it was not his part to rebuke no young man, for full little knew he of what birth he is come, and for what cause he came to this court; and so we leave Sir Kay and turn we unto Beaumains. 25

When he had overtaken the damosel, anon she said,

What dost thou here? thou stinkest all of the kitchen, thy clothes be bawdy of the grease and tallow that thou gainest in King Arthur's kitchen; weenest thou, said she, that I allow thee, for yonder knight that thou killest.^o Nay truly, 5 for thou slewest him unhappily and cowardly; therefore turn again, bawdy kitchen page, I know thee well, for Sir Kay named thee Beaumains. What art thou but a lusk and a turner of broaches and a ladle-washer? Damosel, said Beaumains, say to me what ye will, I will not go from you 10 whatsoever ye say, for I have undertaken to King Arthur for to achieve your adventure, and so shall I finish it to the end, either I shall die therefore. Fie on thee, kitchen knave, wilt thou finish mine adventure? thou shalt anon be met withal, that thou wouldest not for all the broth that ever 15 thou suppest once look him in the face. I shall assay, said Beaumains.

So thus as they rode in the wood, there came a man flying all that ever he might. Whither wilt thou? said Beaumains. O lord, he said, help me, for here by in a slade 20 are six thieves that have taken my lord and bound him, so I am afeard lest they will slay him. Bring me thither, said Beaumains. And so they rode together until they came thereas was the knight bounden; and then he rode unto them, and struck one unto the death, and then another, and at 25 the third stroke he slew the third thief, and then the other three fled. And he rode after them, and he overtook them; and then those three thieves turned again and assailed Beaumains hard, but at the last he slew them, and returned and unbound the knight. And the knight thanked him, and 30 prayed him to ride with him to his castle there a little beside, and he should worshipfully reward him for his good deeds. Sir, said Beaumains, I will no reward have: I was this day made knight of noble Sir Launcelot, and therefore I will no

reward have, but God reward me. And also I must follow this damosel.

And when he came nigh her she bade him ride from her, For thou smellest all of the kitchen: weenest thou that I have joy of thee, for all this deed that thou hast done is but 5 mishapped thee: but thou shalt see a sight shall make thee turn again, and that lightly. Then the same knight which was rescued of the thieves rode after that damosel, and prayed her to lodge with him all that night. And because it was near night the damosel rode with him to his castle, and there they 10 had great cheer, and at supper the knight sat Sir Beaumains afore the damosel. Fie, fie, said she, Sir knight, ye are uncourteous to set a kitchen page afore me; him beseemeth better to stick a swine than to sit afore a damosel of high parage. Then the knight was ashamed at her words,^o and 15 took him up, and set him at a sideboard, and set himself afore him, and so all that night they had good cheer and merry rest.

CHAPTER VI

HOW BEAUMAINS FOUGHT AND SLEW TWO KNIGHTS AT A PASSAGE

AND on the morn the damosel and he took their leave and thanked the knight, and so departed, and rode on their way 20 until they came to a great forest. And there was a great river and but one passage, and there were ready two knights on the farther side to let them the passage.^o What sayest thou, said the damosel, wilt thou match yonder knights or turn again? Nay, said Sir Beaumains, I will not turn again 25 an they were six more. And therewithal he rushed into the water, and in midst of the water either brake their spears

upon other to their hands, and then they drew their swords, and smote eagerly at other. And at the last Sir Beaumains smote the other upon the helm that his head stonied, and therewithal he fell down in the water, and there was he drowned. 5 And then he spurred his horse upon the land, where the other knight fell upon him, and brake his spear, and so they drew their swords and fought long together. At the last Sir Beaumains clave his helm and his head down to the shoulders; and so he rode unto the damosel and bade her ride forth on 10 her way.

Alas, she said, that ever a kitchen page should have that fortune to destroy such two doughty knights: thou weenest thou hast done doughtily, that is not so; for the first knight his horse stumbled, and there he was drowned in the water, 15 and never it was by thy force, nor by thy might. And the last knight by mishap thou camest behind him and mis-
happily thou slew him.

Damosel, said Beaumains, ye may say what ye will, but with whomsomever I have ado withal, I trust to God to 20 serve him or he depart. And therefore I reck not what ye say, so that I may win your lady. Fie, fie, foul kitchen knave, thou shalt see knights that shall abate thy boast. Fair damosel, give me goodly language, and then my care is past, for what knights somever they be, I care not, nor I doubt 25 them not. Also, said she, I say it for thine avail, yet mayest thou turn again with thy worship; for an thou follow me, thou art but slain, for I see all that ever thou dost is but by misadventure, and not by prowess of thy hands. Well, damosel, ye may say what ye will, but wheresomever ye go 30 I will follow you. So this Beaumains rode with that lady till evensong time, and ever she chid him, and would not rest. And they came to a black laund^o; and there was a black hawthorn, and thereon hung a black banner, and on the other

side there hung a black shield, and by it stood a black spear great and long, and a great black horse covered with silk, and a black stone fast by.

CHAPTER VII

HOW BEAUMAINS FOUGHT WITH THE KNIGHT OF THE BLACK LAUNDS, AND FOUGHT WITH HIM TILL HE FELL DOWN AND DIED

THERE sat a knight all armed in black harness, and his name was the Knight of the Black Laund. Then the damosel, 5 when she saw that knight, she bade him flee down that valley, for his horse was not saddled. Gramercy, said Beaumains, for always ye would have me a coward. With that the Black Knight, when she came nigh him, spake and said, Damosel, have ye brought this knight of King Arthur to be 10 your champion? Nay, fair knight, said she, this is but a kitchen knave that was fed in King Arthur's kitchen for alms. Why cometh he, said the knight, in such array? it is shame that he beareth you company. Sir, I cannot be delivered of him, said she, for with me he rideth maugre mine head: 15 God would that ye should put him from me, other to slay him an ye may, for he is an unhappy knave, and unhappily he hath done this day: through mishap I saw him slay two knights at the passage of the water; and other deeds he did before right marvellous and through unhappiness. That 20 marvelleth me, said the Black Knight, that any man that is of worship will have ado with him. They know him not, said the damosel, and for because he rideth with me, they ween that he be some man of worship born. That may be, said the Black Knight; howbeit as ye say that he be no man 25

of worship, he is a full likely person, and full like to be a strong man: but thus much shall I grant you, said the Black Knight; I shall put him down upon one foot, and his horse and his harness he shall leave with me, for it were shame to me to 5 do him any more harm.

When Sir Beaumains heard him say thus, he said, Sir knight, thou art full large of my horse and my harness; I let thee wit it cost thee nought, and whether it liketh thee or not, this laund will I pass maugre thine head. And horse 10 nor harness gettest thou none of mine, but if thou win them with thy hands; and therefore let see what thou canst do. Sayest thou that? said the Black Knight, now yield thy lady from thee, for it beseemeth never a kitchen page to ride with such a lady. Thou liest, said Beaumains, I am a gentle- 15 man born, and of more high lineage than thou, and that will I prove on thy body.

Then in great wrath they departed with their horses, and came together as it had been the thunder, and the Black Knight's spear brake, and Beaumains thrust him through both 20 his sides, and therewith his spear brake, and the truncheon left still in his side. But nevertheless the Black Knight drew his sword, and smote many eager strokes, and of great might, and hurt Beaumains full sore. But at the last the Black Knight, within an hour and an half, he fell down off his horse 25 in swoon, and there he died. And when Beaumains saw him so well horsed and armed, then he alighted down and armed him in his armour, and so took his horse and rode after the damosel.

When she saw him come nigh, she said, Away, kitchen 30 knave, out of the wind, for the smell of thy bawdy clothes grieveth me. Alas, she said, that ever such a knave should by mishap slay so good a knight as thou hast done, but all this is thine unhappiness. But here by is one shall pay thee

all thy payment, and therefore yet I counsel thee, flee. It may happen me, said Beaumains, to be beaten or slain, but I warn you, fair damosel, I will not flee away, nor leave your company, for all that ye can say; for ever ye say that they will kill me or beat me, but howsoever it happeneth I escape, 5 and they lie on the ground. And therefore it were as good for you to hold you still thus all day rebuking me, for away will I not till I see the uttermost of this journey, or else I will be slain, other^o truly beaten; therefore ride on your way, for follow you I will whatsoever happen. 10

CHAPTER VIII

HOW THE BROTHER OF THE KNIGHT THAT WAS SLAIN MET WITH BEAUMAINS, AND FOUGHT WITH BEAUMAINS TILL HE WAS YIELDEN

THUS as they rode together, they saw a knight come driving by them all in green, both his horse and his harness; and when he came nigh the damosel, he asked her, Is that my brother the Black Knight that ye have brought with you? Nay, nay, she said, this unhappy kitchen knave hath 15 slain your brother through unhappiness. Alas, said the Green Knight, that is great pity, that so noble a knight as he was should so unhappily be slain, and namely of a knave's hand, as ye say that he is. Ah! traitor, said the Green Knight, thou shalt die for slaying of my brother; he was a full 20 noble knight, and his name was Sir Percard.^o I defy thee, said Beaumains, for I let thee wit I slew him knightly and not shamefully.

Therewithal the Green Knight rode unto an horn that was green, and it hung upon a thorn, and there he blew three 25 deadly motes, and there came two damosels and armed him

lightly. And then he took a great horse, and a green shield and a green spear. And then they ran together with all their mights, and brake their spears unto their hands. And then they drew their swords, and gave many sad strokes, and 5 either of them wounded other full ill. And at the last, at an overthwart, Beaumains with his horse struck the Green Knight's horse upon the side, that he fell to the earth. And then the Green Knight avoided his horse lightly, and dressed him upon foot. That saw Beaumains, and therewithal he 10 alighted, and they rushed together like two mighty kempes a long while, and sore they bled both. With that came the damosel, and said, My lord the Green Knight, why for shame stand ye so long fighting with the kitchen knave? Alas, it is shame that ever ye were made knight, to see such a lad to match 15 such a knight, as the weed overgrew the corn. Therewith the Green Knight was ashamed, and therewithal he gave a great stroke of might, and clave his shield through. When Beaumains saw his shield cloven asunder he was a little ashamed of that stroke and of her langauge; and then he gave 20 him such a buffet upon the helm that he fell on his knees. And so suddenly Beaumains pulled him upon the ground grovelling. And then the Green Knight cried him mercy, and yielded him unto Sir Beaumains, and prayed him to slay him not. All is in vain, said Beaumains, for thou shalt die 25 but if this damosel that came with me pray me to save thy life. And therewithal he unlaced his helm like as he would slay him. Fie upon thee, false kitchen page, I will never pray thee to save his life, for I will never be so much in thy danger. Then shall he die, said Beaumains. Not so hardy, thou 30 bawdy knave, said the damosel, that thou slay him. Alas, said the Green Knight, suffer me not to die for a fair word may save me. Fair knight, said the Green Knight, save my life, and I will forgive thee the death of my brother,

and for ever to become thy man, and thirty knights that hold of me for ever shall do you service. In the devil's name, said the damosel, that such a bawdy kitchen knave should have thee and thirty knights' service.

Sir knight, said Beaumains, all this availeth thee not, 5 but if my damosel^o speak with me for thy life. And therewithal he made a semblant to slay him. Let be, said the damosel, thou bawdy knave; slay him not, for an thou do thou shalt repent it. Damosel, said Beaumains, your charge is to me a pleasure, and at your commandment his life shall 10 be saved, and else not. Then he said, Sir knight with the green arms, I release thee quit at this damosel's request, for I will not make her wroth, I will fulfil all that she chargeth me. And then the Green Knight kneeled down, and did him homage with his sword. Then said the damosel, Me repent- 15 eth, Green Knight, of your damage, and of your brother's death, the Black Knight, for of your help I had great mister, for I dread me sore to pass this forest. Nay, dread you not, said the Green Knight, for ye shall lodge with me this night, and to-morn I shall help you through this forest. So they 20 took their horses and rode to his manor, which was fast there beside.

CHAPTER IX

HOW THE DAMOSEL AGAIN REBUKED BEAUMAINS, AND WOULD NOT SUFFER HIM TO SIT AT HER TABLE, BUT CALLED HIM KITCHEN BOY

AND ever she rebuked Beaumains, and would not suffer him to sit at her table, but as the Green Knight took him and sat him at a side table. Marvel methinketh, said the 25 Green Knight to the damosel, why ye rebuke this noble

knight as ye do, for I warn you, damosel, he is a full noble knight, and I know no knight is able to match him; therefore ye do great wrong to rebuke him, for he shall do you right good service, for whatsoever he maketh himself, ye shall 5 prove at the end that he is come of a noble blood and of king's lineage. Fie, fie, said the damosel, it is shame for you to say of him such worship. Truly, said the Green Knight, it were shame for me to say of him any disworship, for he hath proved himself a better knight than I am, yet have I met with 10 many knights in my days, and never or this time have I found no knight his match. And so that night they yede unto rest, and all that night the Green Knight commanded thirty knights privily to watch Beaumains, for to keep him from all treason.^o

15 And so on the morn they all arose, and heard their mass and brake their fast; and then they took their horses and rode on their way, and the Green Knight conveyed them through the forest; and there the Green Knight said, My lord Beaumains, I and these thirty knights shall be always 20 at your summons, both early and late, at your calling and whither that ever ye will send us. It is well said, said Beaumains; when that I call upon you ye must yield you unto King Arthur, and all your knights. If that ye so command us, we shall be ready at all times, said the Green Knight.

25 Fie, fie upon thee, in the devil's name, said the damosel, that any good knights should be obedient unto a kitchen knave. So then departed the Green Knight and the damosel. And then she said unto Beaumains, Why followest thou me, thou kitchen boy? Cast away thy shield and thy spear, and 30 flee away; yet I counsel thee betimes or thou shalt say right soon, alas; for wert thou as wight as ever was Wade^o or Launcelot, Tristram, or the good knight Sir Lamorak,^o thou shalt not pass a pass here that is called the Pass Perilous.^o

Damosel, said Beaumains, who is afeard let him flee, for it were shame to turn again sithen I have ridden so long with you. Well, said the damosel, ye shall soon, whether ye will or not.

CHAPTER X

HOW THE THIRD BROTHER, CALLED THE RED KNIGHT, JOUSTED
AND FOUGHT AGAINST BEAUMAINS, AND HOW BEAUMAINS
OVERCAME HIM

So within a while they saw a tower as white as any snow, 5 well matchecold all about, and double dyked. And over the tower gate there hung a fifty shields of divers colours, and under that tower there was a fair meadow. And therein were many knights and squires to behold, scaffolds and pavilions; for there upon the morn should be a great tourna- 10 ment: and the lord of the tower was in his castle and looked out at a window, and saw a damosel, a dwarf, and a knight armed at all points. So God me help, said the lord, with that knight will I joust, for I see that he is a knight-errant.^o And so he armed him and horsed him hastily. And when he was 15 on horseback with his shield and his spear, it was all red, both his horse and his harness, and all that to him longeth. And when that he came nigh him he weened it had been his brother the Black Knight; and then he cried aloud, Brother, what do ye in these marches? Nay, nay, said the damosel, 20 it is not he; this is but a kitchen knave that was brought up for alms in King Arthur's court. Nevertheless, said the Red Knight, I will speak with him or he depart. Ah, said the damosel, this knave hath killed thy brother, and Sir Kay named him Beaumains, and this horse and this harness was 25 thy brother's, the Black Knight. Also I saw thy brother the

Green Knight overcome of his hands. Now may ye be revenged upon him, for I may never be quit of him.

With this either knights departed in sunder, and they came together with all their might, and either of their horses 5 fell to the earth, and they avoided their horses, and put their shields afore them and drew their swords, and either gave other sad strokes, now here, now there, racing, tracing, foining, and hurling like two boars, the space of two hours. And then she cried on high to the Red Knight, Alas, thou 10 noble Red Knight, think what worship hath followed thee, let never a kitchen knave endure thec so long as he doth. Then the Red Knight waxed wroth and doubled his strokes, and hurt Beaumains wonderly sore, that the blood ran down to the ground, that it was wonder to see that strong battle. 15 Yet at the last Sir Beaumains struck him to the earth, and as he would have slain the Red Knight, he cried mercy, saying, Noble knight, slay me not, and I shall yield me to thee with fifty knights with me that be at my commandment. And I forgive thee all the despite that thou hast done to me, 20 and the death of my brother the Black Knight. All this availeth not, said Beaumains, but if my damosel pray me to save thy life. And therewith he made semblant to strike off his head. Let be, thou Beaumains, slay him not, for he is a noble knight, and not so hardy, upon thine head, but thou 25 save him.

Then Beaumains bade the Red Knight, Stand up, and thank the damosel now of thy life. Then the Red Knight prayed him to see his castle, and to be there all night. So the damosel then granted him, and there they had merry 30 cheer. But always the damosel spake many foul words unto Beaumains, whereof the Red Knight had great marvel; and all that night the Red Knight made three score knights to watch Beaumains, that he should have no shame nor villainy.

And upon the morn they heard mass and dined, and the Red Knight came before Beaumains with his three score knights, and there he proffered him his homage and fealty at all times, he and his knights to do him service. I thank you, said Beaumains, but this ye shall grant me: when I call upon you, 5 to come afore my lord King Arthur, and yield you unto him to be his knights. Sir, said the Red Knight, I will be ready, and my fellowship, at your summons. So Sir Beaumains departed and the damosel, and ever she rode chiding him in the foulest manner.

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CHAPTER XI

HOW SIR BEAUMAINS SUFFERED GREAT REBUKES OF THE
DAMOSEL, AND HE SUFFERED IT PATIENTLY

DAMOSEL, said Beaumains, ye are uncourteous so to rebuke me as ye do, for meseemeth I have done you good service, and ever ye threaten me I shall be beaten with knights that we meet, but ever for all your boast they lie in the dust or in the mire, and therefore I pray you rebuke me no more; and 15 when ye see me beaten or yielden as recreant, then may ye bid me go from you shamefully; but first I let you wit I will not depart from you, for I were worse than a fool an I would depart from you all the while that I win worship. Well, said she, right soon there shall meet a knight shall pay thee 20 all thy wages, for he is the most man of worship of the world, except King Arthur. I will well, said Beaumains, the more he is of worship, the more shall be my worship to have ado with him.

Then anon they were ware where was afore them a city 25 rich and fair. And betwixt them and the city a mile and an half there was a fair meadow that seemed new mown,

and therein were many pavilions fair to behold. Lo, said the damosel, yonder is a lord that owneth yonder city, and his custom is, when the weather is fair, to lie in this meadow to joust and tourney. And ever there be about him five hundred knights and gentlemen of arms, and there be all manner of games that any gentleman can devise. That goodly lord, said Beaumains, would I fain see. Thou shalt see him time enough, said the damosel, and so as she rode near she espied the pavilion where he was. Lo, said she, seest thou yonder pavilion that is all of the colour of Inde, and all manner of thing that there is about, men and women, and horses trapped, shields and spears were all of the colour of Inde, and his name is Sir Persant of Inde, the most lordliest knight that ever thou lookedst on. It may well be, said Beaumains, but be he never so stout a knight, in this field I shall abide till that I see him under his shield. Ah, fool, said she, thou wert better flee betimes. Why, said Beaumains, an he be such a knight as ye make him, he will not set upon me with all his men, or with his five hundred knights. For an there come no more but one at once, I shall him not fail whilst my life lasteth. Fie, fie, said the damosel, that ever such a stinking knave should blow such a boast. Damosel, he said, ye are to blame so to rebuke me, for I had liefer do five battles than so to be rebuked, let him come and then let him do his worst.

Sir, she said, I marvel what thou art and of what kin thou art come ; boldly thou speakest, and boldly thou hast done, that have I seen ; therefore I pray thee save thyself an thou mayest, for thy horse and thou have had great travail, and I dread we dwell over long from the siege, for it is but hence seven mile, and all perilous passages we are passed save all only this passage ; and here I dread me sore lest ye shall catch some hurt, therefore I would ye were hence,

that ye were not bruised nor hurt with this strong knight. But I let you wit that Sir Persant of Inde is nothing of might nor strength unto the knight that laid the siege about my lady. As for that, said Sir Beaumains, be it as it be may. For sithen I am come so nigh this knight I will prove his might 5 or I depart from him, and else I shall be shamed an I now withdraw me from him. And therefore, damosel, have ye no doubt by the grace of God I shall so deal with this knight that within two hours after noon I shall deliver him. And then shall we come to the siege by daylight. O Jesu, marvel 10 have I, said the damosel, what manner a man ye be, for it may never be otherwise but that ye be come of a noble blood, for so foul nor shamefully did never woman rule a knight as I have done you, and ever courteously ye have suffered me, and that came never but of a gentle blood. 15

Damosel, said Beaumains, a knight may little do that may not suffer a damosel, for whatsoever ye said unto me I took none heed to your words, for the more ye said the more ye angered me, and my wrath I wreaked upon them that I had ado withal. And therefore all the missaying that ye 20 missaid me furthered me in my battle, and caused me to think to show and prove myself at the end what I was ; for peradventure though I had meat in King Arthur's kitchen, yet I might have had meat enough in other places, but all that I did it for to prove and assay my friends, and that shall 25 be known another day^o ; and whether that I be a gentleman born or none, I let you wit, fair damosel, I have done you gentleman's service, and peradventure better service yet will I do or I depart from you. Alas, she said, fair Beaumains, forgive me all that I have missaid or done against thee. With 30 all my heart, said he, I forgive it you, for ye did nothing but as ye should do, for all your evil words pleased me ; and damosel, said Beaumains, since it liketh you to say thus fair unto

me, wit ye well it gladdeth my heart greatly, and now me seemeth there is no knight living but I am able enough for him.

CHAPTER XII

HOW BEAUMAINS FOUGHT WITH SIR PERSANT OF INDE, AND MADE HIM TO BE YIELDEN

WITH this Sir Persant of Inde had espied them as they hoved in the field, and knightly he sent to them whether he came in war or in peace. Say to thy lord, said Beaumains, I take no force,^o but whether as him list himself. So the messenger went again unto Sir Persant and told him all his answer. Well then will I have ado with him to the utterance, and so he purveyed him and rode against him.

And Beaumains saw him and made him ready, and there they met with all that ever their horses might run, and brast their spears either in three pieces, and their horses rushed so together that both their horses fell dead to the earth; and lightly they avoided their horses and put their shields afore them, and drew their swords, and gave many great strokes that sometime they hurtled together that they fell grovelling on the ground. Thus they fought two hours and more, that their shields and their hauberks were all forhewen,^o and in many steads they were wounded. So at the last Sir Beaumains smote him through the cost of the body, and then he retrayed him here and there, and knightly maintained his battle long time. And at the last, though him loath were, Beaumains smote Sir Persant above upon the helm, that he fell grovelling to the earth; and then he leapt upon him overthwart and unlaced his helm to have slain him.

Then Sir Persant yielded him and asked him mercy.

With that came the damosel and prayed to save his life. I will well, for it were pity this noble knight should die. Gramercy, said Persant, gentle knight and damosel. For certainly now I wot well it was ye that slew my brother the Black Knight at the black thorn^o; he was a full noble knight, 5 his name was Sir Percard. Also I am sure that ye are he that won mine other brother the Green Knight, his name was Sir Pertolepe. Also ye won my brother the Red Knight, Sir Perimones.^o And now since ye have won these, this shall I do for to please you : ye shall have homage and fealty of me, 10 and an hundred knights to be always at your commandment, to go and ride where ye will command us. And so they went unto Sir Persant's pavilion and drank the wine, and ate spices, and afterward Sir Persant made him to rest upon a bed until supper time, and after supper to bed again. And so we leave 15 them there till on the morn.

CHAPTER XIII

OF THE GOODLY COMMUNICATION BETWEEN SIR PERSANT AND BEAUMAINS, AND HOW HE TOLD HIM THAT HIS NAME WAS SIR GARETH

AND so on the morn the damosel and Sir Beaumains heard mass and brake their fast, and so took their leave. Fair damosel, said Persant, whitherward are ye way-leading this knight ? Sir, she said, this knight is going to the siege that 20 besiegeth my sister in the Castle Dangerous.^o Ah, ah, said Persant, that is the Knight of the Red Laund, the which is the most perilous knight that I know now living, and a man that is without mercy, and men say that he hath seven men's strength. God save you, said he to Beaumains, from that 25 knight, for he doth great wrong to that lady, and that is

great pity, for she is one of the fairest ladies of the world, and meseemeth that your damosel is her sister: is not your name Linet°? said he. Yea, sir, said she, and my lady my sister's name is Dame Lionesse. Now shall I tell you, said 5 Sir Persant, this Red Knight of the Red Laund hath lain long at the siege, well-nigh this two years, and many times he might have had her an he had would, but he prolongeth the time to this intent, for to have Sir Launcelot du Lake to do battle with him, or Sir Tristram, or Sir Lamorak de Galis, or 10 Sir Gawaine, and this is his tarrying so long at the siege.

Now my lord Sir Persant of Inde, said the damosel Linet, I require you that ye will make this gentleman knight or ever he fight with the Red Knight. I will with all my heart, said Sir Persant, an it please him to take the order of knighthood 15 of so simple a man as I am. Sir, said Beaumains, I thank you for your good will, for I am better sped, for certainly the noble knight Sir Launcelot made me knight. Ah, said Sir Persant, of a more renowned knight might ye not be made knight; for of all knights he may be called chief of knighthood; and so all the world saith, that betwixt three knights 20 is departed clearly knighthood, that is Launcelot du Lake, Sir Tristram de Liones, and Sir Lamorak de Galis: these bear now the renown. There be many other knights, as Sir Palamides the Saracen and Sir Safere his brother; also Sir 25 Bleoberis and Sir Blamore de Ganis his brother; also Sir Bors de Ganis and Sir Ector de Maris and Sir Percivale de Galis; these and many more be noble knights, but there be none that pass the three above said°; therefore God speed you well, said Sir Persant, for an ye may match the Red 30 Knight ye shall be called the fourth of the world.

Sir, said Beaumains, I would fain be of good fame and of knighthood. And I let you wit I came of good men, for I dare say my father was a noble man, and so that ye will keep

it in close, and this damosel, I will tell you of what kin I am. We will not discover you, said they both, till ye command us, by the faith we owe unto God. Truly then, said he, my name is Gareth of Orkney, and King Lot was my father, and my mother is King Arthur's sister, her name is Dame Mor- 5 gawse,^o and Sir Gawaine is my brother, and Sir Agravaine and Sir Gaheris, and I am the youngest of them all. And yet wot not King Arthur nor Sir Gawaine what I am.

CHAPTER XIV

HOW THE LADY THAT WAS BESIEGED HAD WORD FROM HER SISTER HOW SHE HAD BROUGHT A KNIGHT TO FIGHT FOR HER, AND WHAT BATTLES HE HAD ACHIEVED

So the book saith that the lady that was besieged had word of her sister's coming by the dwarf, and a knight with 10 her, and how he had passed all the perilous passages. What manner a man is he? said the lady. He is a noble knight, truly, madam, said the dwarf, and but a young man, but he is as likely a man as ever ye saw any. What is he? said the damosel, and of what kin is he come, and of whom was he 15 made knight? Madam, said the dwarf, he is the king's son of Orkney, but his name I will not tell you as at this time^o; but wit ye well, of Sir Launcelot was he made knight, for of none other would he be made knight, and Sir Kay named him Beaumains. How escaped he, said the lady, from the 20 brethren of Persant? Madam, he said, as a noble knight should. First, he slew two brethren at a passage of a water. Ah! said she, they were good knights, but they were murderers, the one hight Gherard le Breuse, and the other knight hight Sir Arnold le Breuse.^o Then, madam, he recountered 25

with the Black Knight, and slew him in plain battle, and so he took his horse and his armour and fought with the Green Knight and won him in plain battle, and in like wise he served the Red Knight, and after in the same wise he served the Blue Knight and won him in plain battle. Then, said the lady, he hath overcome Sir Persant of Inde, one of the noblest knights of the world, and the dwarf said, He hath won all the four brethren and slain the Black Knight, and yet he did more to-fore: he overthrew Sir Kay and left him nigh 10 dead upon the ground; also he did a great battle with Sir Launcelot, and there they departed on even hands: and then Sir Launcelot made him knight.

Dwarf, said the lady, I am glad of these tidings, therefore go thou in an hermitage of mine hereby, and there shalt 15 thou bear with thee of my wine in two flagons of silver, they are of two gallons, and also two cast of bread with fat venison baked, and dainty fowls; and a cup of gold here I deliver thee, that is rich and precious; and bear all this to mine hermitage, and put it in the hermit's hands. And sithen go 20 thou unto my sister and greet her well, and commend me unto that gentle knight, and pray him to eat and to drink and make him strong, and say ye him I thank him of his courtesy and goodness, that he would take upon him such labour for me that never did him bounty nor courtesy. Also 25 pray him that he be of good heart and courage, for he shall meet with a full noble knight, but he is neither of bounty, courtesy, nor gentleness; for he attendeth unto nothing but to murder, and that is the cause I cannot praise him nor love him.

30 So this dwarf departed, and came to Sir Persant, where he found the damosel Linet and Sir Beaumains, and there he told them all as ye have heard; and then they took their leave, but Sir Persant took an ambling hackney and conveyed

them on their ways, and then beleft them to God ; and so within a little while they came to that hermitage, and there they drank the wine, and ate the venison and the fowls baken. And so when they had repasted them well, the dwarf returned again with his vessel unto the castle again ; and there met 5 with him the Red Knight of the Red Launds, and asked him from whence that he came, and where he had been. Sir, said the dwarf, I have been with my lady's sister of this castle, and she hath been at King Arthur's court, and brought a knight with her. Then I account her travail but lost ; for 10 though she had brought with her Sir Launcelot, Sir Tristram, Sir Lamorak, or Sir Gawaine, I would think myself good enough for them all.

It may well be, said the dwarf, but this knight hath passed all the perilous passages, and slain the Black Knight and other 15 two more, and won the Green Knight, the Red Knight, and the Blue Knight. Then is he one of these four that I have afore rehearsed. He is none of those, said the dwarf, but he is a king's son. What is his name ? said the Red Knight of the Red Launds. That will I not tell you, said the dwarf, but 20 Sir Kay upon scorn named him Beaumains. I care not, said the knight, what knight so ever he be, for I shall soon deliver him. And if I ever match him he shall have a shameful death as many other have had. That were pity, said the dwarf, and it is marvel that ye make such shameful war upon 25 noble knights.

CHAPTER XV

HOW THE DAMOSEL AND BEAUMAINS CAME TO THE SIEGE, AND
CAME TO A SYCAMORE TREE, AND THERE BEAUMAINS BLEW
A HORN, AND THEN THE KNIGHT OF THE RED LAUNDS CAME
TO FIGHT WITH HIM

Now leave we the knight and the dwarf, and speak we of Beaumains, that all night lay in the hermitage ; and upon the morn he and the damosel Linet heard their mass and brake their fast. And then they took their horses and rode through-
5 out a fair forest ; and then they came to a plain, and saw where were many pavilions and tents, and a fair castle, and there was much smoke and great noise ; and when they came near the siege Sir Beaumains espied upon great trees, as he rode, how there hung full goodly armed knights by the neck, and
10 their shields about their necks with their swords, and gilt spurs upon their heels, and so there hung nigh a forty knights shamefully with full rich arms.

Then Sir Beaumains abated his countenance and said, What meaneth this ? Fair sir, said the damosel, abate not
15 your cheer for all this sight, for ye must courage yourself, or else ye be all shent, for all these knights came hither to this siege to rescue my sister Dame Lionesse, and when the Red Knight of the Red Launds had overcome them, he put them to this shameful death without mercy and pity. And
20 in the same wise he will serve you but if you quit you the better.

Now Jesu defend me, said Beaumains, from such a villainous death and shenship of arms. For rather than I should so be faren withal, I would rather be slain manly in plain
25 battle. So were ye better, said the damosel ; for trust not,

in him is no courtesy, but all goeth to the death or shameful murder, and that is pity, for he is a full likely man, well made of body, and a full noble knight of prowess, and a lord of great lands and possessions. Truly, said Beaumains, he may well be a good knight, but he useth shameful customs, and 5 it is marvel that he endureth so long that none of the noble knights of my lord Arthur's have not dealt with him.

And then they rode to the dykes, and saw them double dyked with full warlike walls ; and there were lodged many great lords nigh the walls ; and there was great noise of 10 minstrelsy ; and the sea beat upon the one side of the walls, where were many ships and mariners' noise with "hale and how." And also there was fast by a sycamore tree, and there hung an horn, the greatest that ever they saw, of an elephant's bone ; and this Knight of the Red Launds had hanged 15 it up there, that if there came any errant-knight, he must blow that horn, and then will he make him ready and come to him to do battle. But, sir, I pray you, said the damosel Linet, blow ye not the horn till it be high noon, for now it is about prime, and now increaseth his might, that as men say 20 he hath seven men's strength.^o Ah, fie for shame, fair damosel, say ye never so more to me ; for, an he were as good a knight as ever was, I shall never fail him in his most might, for either I will win worship worshipfully, or die knightly in the field. And therewith he spurred his horse straight to the 25 sycamore tree, and blew so the horn eagerly that all the siege and the castle rang thereof. And then there leapt out knights out of their tents and pavilions, and they within the castle looked over the walls and out at windows.

Then the Red Knight of the Red Launds armed him 30 hastily, and two barons set on his spurs upon his heels, and all was blood red, his armour, spear, and shield. And an earl buckled his helm upon his head, and then they brought

him a red spear and a red steed, and so he rode into a little vale under the castle, that all that were in the castle and at the siege might behold the battle.

CHAPTER XVI

HOW THE TWO KNIGHTS MET TOGETHER, AND OF THEIR TALK- ING, AND HOW THEY BEGAN THEIR BATTLE

SIR, said the damosel Linet unto Sir Beaumains, look ye
5 be glad and light, for yonder is your deadly enemy, and at
yonder window is my lady, my sister, Dame Lionesse. Where? said Beaumains. Yonder, said the damosel, and pointed with her finger. That is truth, said Beaumains. She beseemeth afar the fairest lady that ever I looked upon; and truly,
10 he said, I ask no better quarrel than now for to do battle, for truly she shall be my lady, and for her I will fight. And ever he looked up to the window with glad countenance, and the Lady Lionesse made curtsey to him down to the earth, with holding up both their hands.

15 With that the Red Knight of the Red Launds called to Sir Beaumains, Leave, sir knight, thy looking, and behold me, I counsel thee; for I warn thee well she is my lady, and for her I have done many strong battles. If thou have so done, said Beaumains, meseemeth it was but waste labour,
20 for she loveth none of thy fellowship, and thou to love that loveth not thee is but great folly. For an I understood that she were not glad of my coming, I would be advised or I did battle for her. But I understand by the besieging of this castle she may forbear thy fellowship. And therefore wit
25 thou well, thou Red Knight of the Red Launds, I love her, and will rescue her, or else to die.° Sayst thou that? said

the Red Knight, meseemeth thou ought of reason to be ware by yonder knights that thou sawest hang upon yonder trees. Fie for shame, said Beaumains, that ever thou shouldest say or do so evil, for in that thou shamest thyself and knighthood, and thou mayst be sure there will no lady love thee that 5 knoweth thy wicked customs. And now thou weenest that the sight of these hanged knights should fear me. Nay truly, not so ; that shameful sight causeth me to have courage and hardness against thee, more than I would have had against thee an thou wert a well-ruled knight. Make thee 10 ready, said the Red Knight of the Red Launds, and talk no longer with me.

Then Sir Beaumains bade the damosel go from him ; and then they put their spears in their rests, and came together with all their might that they had both, and either smote 15 other in midst of their shields that the paitrelles, surcingles, and cruppers brast, and fell to the earth both, and the reins of their bridles in their hands ; and so they lay a great while sore astonished, that all that were in the castle and in the siege weened their necks had been broken ; and then many a 20 stranger and other said the strange knight was a big man, and a noble joustier, for or now we saw never no knight match the Red Knight of the Red Launds : thus they said, both within the castle and without. Then lightly they avoided their horses and put their shields afore them, and drew their 25 swords and ran together like two fierce lions, and either gave other such buffets upon their helms that they reeled backward both two strides ; and then they recovered both, and hewed great pieces off their harness and their shields that a great part fell into the fields.

CHAPTER XVII

HOW AFTER LONG FIGHTING BEAUMAINS OVERCAME THE KNIGHT AND WOULD HAVE SLAIN HIM, BUT AT THE REQUEST OF THE LORDS HE SAVED HIS LIFE, AND MADE HIM TO YIELD HIM TO THE LADY

AND then thus they fought till it was past noon, and never would stint, till at the last they lacked wind both; and then they stood wagging and scattering, panting, blowing and bleeding, that all that beheld them for the most part wept for pity. So when they had rested them a while they yede to battle again, tracing, racing, foining as two boars. And at some time they took their run as it had been two rams, and hurtled together that sometime they fell grovelling to the earth: and at some time they were so amazed that either took other's sword instead of his own.

Thus they endured till evensong time, that there was none that beheld them might know whether was like to win the battle; and their armour was so forhewn that men might see their naked sides; and in other places they were naked, but ever the naked places they did defend. And the Red Knight was a wily knight of war, and his wily fighting taught Sir Beaumains to be wise; but he abought it full sore or he did espy his fighting.

And thus by assent of them both they granted either other to rest; and so they set them down upon two molehills there beside the fighting place, and either of them unlaced his helm, and took the cold wind; for either of their pages was fast by them, to come when they called to unlace their harness and to set them on again at their commandment. And then when Sir Beaumains' helm was off, he looked up to

the window, and there he saw the fair lady Dame Lionesse, and she made him such countenance that his heart waxed light and jolly^o; and therewith he bade the Red Knight of the Red Launds make him ready, and let us do the battle to the utterance. I will well, said the knight, and then they laced 5 up their helms, and their pages avoided, and they stepped together and fought freshly ; but the Red Knight of the Red Launds awaited him, and at an overthwart smote him within the hand, that his sword fell out of his hand ; and yet he gave him another buffet upon the helm that he fell grovelling 10 to the earth, and the Red Knight fell over him, for to hold him down.

Then cried the maiden Linet on high : O Sir Beaumains, where is thy courage become ? Alas, my lady my sister be- holdeth thee, and she sobbeth and weepeth, that maketh 15 mine heart heavy. When Sir Beaumains heard her say so, he abraid up with a great might and gat him upon his feet, and lightly he leapt to his sword and gripped it in his hand, and doubled his pace unto the Red Knight, and there they fought a new battle together. But Sir Beaumains then 20 doubled his strokes, and smote so thick that he smote the sword out of his hand, and then he smote him upon the helm that he fell to the earth, and Sir Beaumains fell upon him, and unlaced his helm to have slain him ; and then he yielded him and asked mercy, and said with a loud voice : O noble 25 knight, I yield me to thy mercy.

Then Sir Beaumains bethought him upon the knights that he had made to be hanged shamefully, and then he said: I may not with my worship save thy life, for the shameful deaths that thou hast caused many full good knights to die. 30 Sir, said the Red Knight of the Red Launds, hold your hand and ye shall know the causes why I put them to so shameful a death. Say on, said Sir Beaumains. Sir, I loved once a

lady, a fair damosel, and she had her brother slain ; and she said it was Sir Launcelot du Lake, or else Sir Gawain ; and she prayed me as that I loved her heartily, that I would make her a promise by the faith of my knighthood, for to labour 5 daily in arms unto I met with one of them ; and all that I might overcome I should put them unto a villainous death ; and this is the cause that I have put all these knights to death, and so I ensured her to do all the villainy unto King Arthur's 10 knights, and that I should take vengeance upon all these 10 knights. And, sir, now I will thee tell that every day my strength increaseth till noon, and all this time have I seven men's strength.^o

CHAPTER XVIII

HOW THE KNIGHT YIELDED HIM, AND HOW BEAUMAINS MADE
HIM TO GO UNTO KING ARTHUR'S COURT, AND TO CRY SIR
LAUNCELOT MERCY

THEN came there many earls, and barons, and noble 15 knights, and prayed that knight to save his life, and take him to your prisoner. And all they fell upon their knees, and prayed him of mercy, and that he would save his life ; and, Sir, they all said, it were fairer of him to take homage and fealty, and let him hold his lands of you than for to slay him ; by his death ye shall have none advantage, and 20 his misdeeds that be done may not be undone ; and therefore he shall make amends to all parties, and we all will become your men and do you homage and fealty. Fair lords, said Beaumains, wit you well I am full loath to slay this knight, nevertheless he hath done passing ill and shame- 25 fully ; but insomuch all that he did was at a lady's request I blame him the less ; and so for your sake I will release him

that he shall have his life upon this covenant, that he go within the castle, and yield him there to the lady, and if she will forgive and quit him, I will well ; with this he make her amends of all the trespass he hath done against her and her lands. And also, when that is done, that ye go unto the 5 court of King Arthur, and there that ye ask Sir Launcelot mercy, and Sir Gawayne, for the evil will ye have had against them. Sir, said the Red Knight of the Red Launds, all this will I do as ye command, and siker assurance and borrows ye shall have. And so then when the assurance was made, 10 he made his homage and fealty, and all those earls and barons with him.

And then the maiden Linet came to Sir Beaumains, and unarmed him and searched his wounds, and stinted his blood, and in likewise she did to the Red Knight of the Red 15 Launds. And there they sojourned ten days in their tents ; and the Red Knight made his lords and servants to do all the pleasure that they might unto Sir Beaumains. And so within a while the Red Knight of the Red Launds yede unto the castle, and put him in her grace. And so she received 20 him upon sufficient surety, so all her hurts were well restored of all that she could complain. And then he departed unto the court of King Arthur, and there openly the Red Knight of the Red Launds put him in the mercy of Sir Launcelot and Sir Gawayne, and there he told openly how he was overcome 25 and by whom, and also he told all the battles from the beginning unto the ending. Jesu mercy, said King Arthur and Sir Gawayne, we marvel much of what blood he is come, for he is a noble knight. Have ye no marvel, said Sir Launcelot, for ye shall right well wit that he is come of a full noble 30 blood ; and as for his might and hardiness, there be but few now living that is so mighty as he is, and so noble of prowess. It seemeth by you, said King Arthur, that ye know his name,

and from whence he is come, and of what blood he is. I suppose I do so, said Launcelot, or else I would not have given him the order of knighthood; but he gave me such charge at that time that I should never discover him until 5 he required me, or else it be known openly by some other.

CHAPTER XIX

HOW BEAUMAINS CAME TO THE LADY, AND WHEN HE CAME TO THE CASTLE THE GATES WERE CLOSED AGAINST HIM, AND OF THE WORDS THAT THE LADY SAID TO HIM

Now turn we unto Sir Beaumains that desired of Linet that he might see her sister, his lady. Sir, she said, I would fain ye saw her. Then Sir Beaumains all armed him, and took his horse and his spear, and rode straight unto the castle. 10 And when he came to the gate he found there many men armed, and pulled up the drawbridge and drew the port close.

Then marvelled he why they would not suffer him to enter. And then he looked up to the window; and there he saw the fair Lionesse^o that said on high: Go thy way, Sir Beaumains, 15 for as yet thou shalt not have wholly my love, unto the time that thou be called one of the number of the worthy knights.^o And therefore go labour in worship this twelvemonth, and then thou shalt hear new tidings. Alas, fair lady, said Beaumains, I have not deserved that ye should show me this 20 strangeness, and I had weened that I should have right good cheer with you, and unto my power I have deserved thank, and well I am sure I have bought your love with part of the best blood within my body. Fair courteous knight, said Dame Lionesse, be not displeased nor over-hasty; for wit you 25 well your great travail nor good love shall not be lost, for I

consider your great travail and labour, your bounty and your goodness as me ought to do. And therefore go on your way, and look that ye be of good comfort, for all shall be for your worship and for the best, and perdy a twelvemonth will soon be done, and trust me, fair knight, I shall be true to ⁵ you, and never to betray you, but to my death I shall love you and none other. And therewithal she turned her from the window, and Sir Beaumains rode awayward from the castle, making great dole, and so he rode here and there and wist not where he rode, till it was dark night. And then it happened ¹⁰ to him to come to a poor man's house, and there he was harboured all that night.

But Sir Beaumains had no rest, but wallowed and writhed for the love of the lady of the castle. And so upon the morrow he took his horse and rode until underne, and then ¹⁵ he came to a broad water, and thereby was a great lodge, and there he alighted to sleep and laid his head upon the shield, and betook his horse to the dwarf, and commanded him to watch all night.

Now turn we to the lady of the same castle, that thought ²⁰ much upon Beaumains, and then she called unto her Sir Gringamore^o her brother, and prayed him in all manner, as he loved her heartily, that he would ride after Sir Beaumains: And ever have ye wait upon him till ye may find him sleeping, for I am sure in his heaviness he will alight down in some place, ²⁵ and lie him down to sleep; and therefore have ye your wait upon him, and in the priviest manner ye can, take his dwarf, and go ye your way with him as fast as ever ye may or Sir Beaumains awake. For my sister Linet telleth me that he can tell of what kindred he is come, and what is his right name. ³⁰ And the meanwhile I and my sister will ride unto your castle to await when ye bring with you the dwarf. And then when ye have brought him unto your castle, I will have him in

examination myself. Unto the time that I know what is his right name, and of what kindred he is come, shall I never be merry at my heart. Sister, said Sir Gringamore, all this shall be done after your intent.

5 And so he rode all the other^o day and the night till that he found Sir Beaumains lying by a water, and his head upon his shield, for to sleep. And then when he saw Sir Beaumains fast asleep, he came stilly stalking behind the dwarf, and plucked him fast under his arm, and so he rode away with him as fast
10 as ever he might unto his own castle. And this Sir Gringamore's arms were all black, and that to him longeth. But ever as he rode with the dwarf toward his castle, he cried unto his lord and prayed him of help. And therewith awoke Sir Beaumains, and up he leapt lightly, and saw where Sir
15 Gringamore rode his way with the dwarf, and so Sir Gringamore rode out of his sight.

CHAPTER XX

HOW SIR BEAUMAINS RODE AFTER TO RESCUE HIS DWARF, AND CAME INTO THE CASTLE WHERE HE WAS

THEN Sir Beaumains put on his helm anon, and buckled his shield, and took his horse, and rode after him all that ever he might ride through marshes, and fields, and great dales,
20 that many times his horse and he plunged over the head in deep mires, for he knew not the way, but took the gainest way in that woodness,^o that many times he was like to perish. And at the last him happened to come to a fair green way, and there he met with a poor man of the country, whom he saluted and asked him whether he met not with a knight upon
25 a black horse and all black harness, a little dwarf sitting be-

hind him with heavy cheer. Sir, said the poor man, here by me came Sir Gringamore the knight, with such a dwarf mourning as ye say ; and therefore I rede you not follow him, for he is one of the periloust knights^o of the world, and his castle is here nigh hand but two mile ; therefore we advise you ride 5 not after Sir Gringamore, but if ye owe him good will.

So leave we Sir Beaumains riding toward the castle, and speak we of Sir Gringamore and the dwarf. Anon as the dwarf was come to the castle, Dame Lionesse and Dame Linet her sister, asked the dwarf where was his master born, and 10 of what lineage he was come. And but if thou tell me, said Dame Lionesse, thou shalt never escape this castle, but ever here to be prisoner. As for that, said the dwarf, I fear not greatly to tell his name and of what kin he is come. Wit you well he is a king's son, and his mother is sister to King Arthur, 15 and he is brother to the good knight Sir Gawaine, and his name is Sir Gareth of Orkney. And now I have told you his right name, I pray you, fair lady, let me go to my lord again, for he will never out of this country until that he have me again. And if he be angry he will do much harm or that he be stint, and 20 work you wrack in this country. As for that threatening, said Sir Gringamore, be it as it be may, we will go to dinner. And so they washed and went to meat, and made them merry and well at ease, and because the Lady Lionesse of the castle was there, they made great joy. Truly, madam, said Linet 25 unto her sister, well may he be a king's son, for he hath many good tatches on him, for he is courteous and mild, and the most suffering man that ever I met withal. For I dare say there was never gentlewoman reviled man in so foul a manner as I have rebuked him ; and at all times he gave me goodly 30 and meek answers again.

And as they sat thus talking, there came Sir Gareth in at the gate with an angry countenance, and his sword drawn

in his hand, and cried aloud that all the castle might hear it, saying : Thou traitor, Sir Gringamore, deliver me my dwarf again, or by the faith that I owe to the order of knighthood, I shall do thee all the harm that I can. Then Sir 5 Gringamore looked out at a window and said, Sir Gareth of Orkney, leave thy boasting words, for thou gettest not thy dwarf again. Thou coward knight, said Sir Gareth, bring him with thee, and come and do battle with me, and win him and take him. So will I do, said Sir Gringamore, an me list, 10 but for all thy great words thou gettest him not. Ah ! fair brother, said Dame Lionesse, I would he had his dwarf again, for I would he were not wroth, for now he hath told me all my desire I keep no more of the dwarf. And also, brother, he hath done much for me, and delivered me from the Red 15 Knight of the Red Launds, and therefore, brother, I owe him my service afore all knights living. And wit ye well that I love him before all other, and full fain I would speak with him. But in nowise I would that he wist what I were, but that I were another strange lady.

20 Well, said Sir Gringamore, sithen I know now your will, I will obey now unto him. And right therewithal he went down unto Sir Gareth, and said : Sir, I cry you mercy, and all that I have misdone I will amend it at your will. And therefore I pray you that ye would alight, and take such cheer 25 as I can make you in this castle. Shall I have my dwarf ? said Sir Gareth. Yea, sir, and all the pleasaunce that I can make you, for as soon as your dwarf told me what ye were and of what blood ye are come, and what noble deeds ye have done in these marches, then I repented of my deeds. And 30 then Sir Gareth alighted, and there came his dwarf and took his horse. O my fellow, said Sir Gareth, I have had many adventures for thy sake. And so Sir Gringamore took him by the hand and led him into the hall where his own wife was.

CHAPTER XXI

HOW SIR GARETH, OTHERWISE CALLED BEAUMAINS, CAME TO THE PRESENCE OF HIS LADY, AND HOW THEY TOOK ACQUAINTANCE, AND OF THEIR LOVE

AND then came forth Dame Lionesse arrayed like a princess, and there she made him passing good cheer, and he her again; and they had goodly language and lovely countenance together. And Sir Gareth thought many times, Jesu, would that the lady of the Castle Perilous were so fair as she was.^{o 5} There were all manner of games and plays, of dancing and singing. And ever the more Sir Gareth beheld that lady, the more he loved her; and so he burned in love that he was past himself in his reason; and forth toward night they yede unto supper, and Sir Gareth might not eat, for his love was ¹⁰ so hot that he wist not where he was.

All these looks espied Sir Gringamore, and then at-after supper he called his sister Dame Lionesse into a chamber, and said: Fair sister, I have well espied your countenance betwixt you and this knight, and I will, sister, that ye wit ¹⁵ he is a full noble knight, and if ye can make him to abide here I will do him all the pleasure that I can, for an ye were better than ye are, ye were well bywaryd upon him. Fair brother, said Dame Lionesse, I understand well that the knight is good, and come he is of a noble house. Notwithstanding, I ²⁰ will assay him better, howbeit I am most behoden to him of any earthly man; for he hath had great labour for my love, and passed many a dangerous passage.

Right so Sir Gringamore went unto Sir Gareth, and said, Sir, make ye good cheer, for ye shall have none other cause, ²⁵ for this lady, my sister, is yours at all times, her worship

saved, for wit ye well she loveth you as well as ye do her, and better if better may be. An I wist that, said Sir Gareth, there lived not a gladder man than I would be. Upon my worship, said Sir Gringamore, trust unto my promise; and 5 as long as it liketh you ye shall sojourn with me, and this lady shall be with us daily and nightly to make you all the cheer that she can. I will well, said Sir Gareth, for I have promised to be nigh this country this twelvemonth. And well I am sure King Arthur and other noble knights will find 10 me where that I am within this twelvemonth. For I shall be sought and found, if that I be alive. And then the noble knight Sir Gareth went unto the Dame Lionesse, which he then much loved, and kissed her many times, and either made great joy of other. And there she promised him her love 15 certainly, to love him and none other the days of her life. Then this lady, Dame Lionesse, by the assent of her brother, told Sir Gareth all the truth what she was, and how she was the same lady that he did battle for, and how she was lady of the Castle Perilous, and there she told him how she caused 20 her brother to take away his dwarf,¹ for this cause, to know the certainty what was your name, and of what kin ye were come.^o

So leave we Sir Gareth there with Sir Gringamore and his sisters, and turn we unto King Arthur, that at the next feast 25 of Pentecost^o held his feast; and there came the Green Knight with fifty knights, and yielded them all unto King Arthur. And so there came the Red Knight his brother, and yielded him to King Arthur, and three score knights with him. Also there came the Blue Knight, brother to them, 30 with an hundred knights, and yielded them unto King Arthur; and the Green Knight's name was Pertolepe, and the Red Knight's name was Perimones, and the Blue Knight's name

¹ Printed by Caxton as part of chap. xxii.

was Sir Persant of Inde. These three brethren told King Arthur how they were overcome by a knight that a damosel had with her, and called him Beaumains. Jesu, said the king, I marvel what knight he is, and of what lineage he is come. He was with me a twelvemonth, and poorly and 5 shamefully he was fostered, and Sir Kay in scorn named him Beaumains. So right as the king stood so talking with these three brethren, there came Sir Launcelot du Lake, and told the king that there was come a goodly lord with six hundred knights with him. 10

Then the king went out of Carlion, for there was the feast, and there came to him this lord, and saluted the king in a goodly manner. What will ye, said King Arthur, and what is your errand? Sir, he said, my name is the Red Knight of the Red Launds, but my name is Sir Ironside^o; and sir, 15 wit ye well, here I am sent to you of a knight that is called Beaumains, for he won me in plain battle hand for hand, and so did never no knight but he, that ever had the better of me this thirty winter; the which commanded to yield me to you at your will. Ye are welcome, said the king, for ye have 20 been long a great foe to me and my court, and now I trust to God I shall so entreat you that ye shall be my friend. Sir, both I and these five hundred knights shall always be at your summons to do you service as may lie in our powers. Jesu mercy, said King Arthur, I am much beholden unto that 25 knight that hath put so his body in devoir to worship me and my court. And as to thee, Ironside, that art called the Red Knight of the Red Launds, thou art called a perilous knight; and if thou wilt hold of me I shall worship thee and make thee knight of the Table Round; but then thou must be no more 30 a murderer. Sir, as to that, I have promised unto Sir Beaumains never more to use such customs, for all the shameful customs that I used I did at the request of a lady that I loved;

and therefore I must go unto Sir Launcelot, and unto Sir Gawaine, and ask them forgiveness of the evil will I had unto them; for all that I put to death was all only for the love of Sir Launcelot and of Sir Gawaine.^o They be here now, said 5 the king, afore thee, now may ye say to them what ye will. And then he kneeled down unto Sir Launcelot, and to Sir Gawaine, and prayed them of forgiveness of his enmity that ever he had against them.

CHAPTER XXIV

HOW KING ARTHUR PARDONED THEM, AND DEMANDED OF THEM WHERE SIR GARETH WAS

THEN goodly they said all at once, God forgive you, and 10 we do, and pray you that ye will tell us where we may find Sir Beaumains. Fair lords, said Sir Ironside, I cannot tell you, for it is full hard to find him; for such young knights as he is one, when they be in their adventures be never abiding in no place. But to say the worship that the Red Knight of 15 the Red Launds, and Sir Persant and his brother said of Beaumains, it was marvel to hear. Well, my fair lords, said King Arthur, wit you well I shall do you honour for the love of Sir Beaumains, and as soon as ever I meet with him I shall make you all upon one day knights of the Table Round. 20 And as to thee, Sir Persant of Inde, thou hast been ever called a full noble knight, and so have ever been thy three brethren called. But I marvel, said the king, that I hear not of the Black Knight your brother, he was a full noble knight. Sir, said Pertolepe, the Green Knight, Sir Beaumains slew him 25 in a recounter with his spear, his name was Sir Percard. That was great pity, said the king, and so said many knights.

For these four brethren were full well known in the court of King Arthur for noble knights, for long time they had holden war against the knights of the Round Table. Then said Pertolepe, the Green Knight, to the king: At a passage of the water of Mortaise^o there encountered Sir Beaumains 5 with two brethren that ever for the most part kept that passage, and they were two deadly knights, and there he slew the eldest brother in the water, and smote him upon the head such a buffet that he fell down in the water, and there he was drowned, and his name was Sir Gherard le 10 Breusse; and after he slew the other brother upon the land, his name was Sir Arnold le Breusse.

CHAPTER XXV¹

HOW THE QUEEN OF ORKNEY CAME TO THIS FEAST OF PENTECOST, AND SIR GAWAINE AND HIS BRETHREN CAME TO ASK HER BLESSING

So then the king and they went to meat, and were served in the best manner. And as they sat at the meat, there came in the Queen of Orkney, with ladies and knights a great 15 number. And then Sir Gawaine, Sir Agravaine, and Gaheris arose, and went to her and saluted her upon their knees, and asked her blessing; for in fifteen year they had not seen her. Then she spake on high to her brother King Arthur: Where have ye done my young son Sir Gareth? He was here 20 amongst you a twelvemonth, and ye made a kitchen knave of him, the which is shame to you all. Alas, where have ye done my dear son that was my joy and bliss? O dear mother,

¹ In Caxton's edition this chapter is misnumbered xxvi, setting the numeration wrong to the end of the book.

said Sir Gawaine, I knew him not. Nor I, said the king, that now me repenteth, but thanked be God he is proved a worshipful knight as any is now living of his years, and I shall never be glad till I may find him.

5 Ah, brother, said the queen unto King Arthur, and unto Sir Gawaine, and to all her sons, ye did yourself great shame when ye amongst you kept my son in the kitchen and fed him like a poor hog. Fair sister, said King Arthur, ye shall right well wit I knew him not, nor no more did Sir Gawaine, nor 10 his brethren; but sithen it is so, said the king, that he is thus gone from us all, we must shape a remedy to find him. Also, sister, meseemeth ye might have done me to wit^o of his coming, and then an I had not done well to him ye might have blamed me. For when he came to this court he came leaning 15 upon two men's shoulders, as though he might not have gone. And then he asked me three gifts; and one he asked the same day, that was that I would give him meat enough that twelvenonth; and the other two gifts he asked that day a twelvemonth, and that was that he might have the adventure 20 of the damosel Linet, and the third was that Sir Launcelot should make him knight when he desired him. And so I granted him all his desire, and many in this court marvelled that he desired his sustenance for a twelvemonth. And thereby, we deemed, many of us, that he was not come of a 25 noble house.

Sir, said the Queen of Orkney unto King Arthur her brother, wit ye well that I sent him unto you right well armed and horsed, and worshipfully beseen of his body, and gold, and silver plenty to spend. It may be, said the king, 30 but thereof saw we none, save that same day as he departed from us, knights told me that there came a dwarf hither suddenly, and brought him armour and a good horse full well and richly beseen; and thereat we all had marvel from

whence that riches came, that we deemed all that he was come of men of worship. Brother, said the queen, all that ye say I believe, for ever sithen he was grown he was marvellously witted, and ever he was faithful and true of his promise. But I marvel, said she, that Sir Kay did mock him and scorn him, 5 and gave him that name Beaumains; yet, Sir Kay, said the queen, named him more righteously than he weened; for I dare say an he be alive, he is as fair an handed man and well disposed as any is living. Sir,° said Arthur, let this language be still, and by the grace of God he shall be found an he be 10 within this seven realms, and let all this pass and be merry, for he is proved to be a man of worship, and that is my joy.

CHAPTER XXVI

HOW KING ARTHUR SENT FOR THE LADY LIONESSE, AND HOW
SHE LET CRY A TOURNEY AT HER CASTLE, WHEREAS CAME
MANY KNIGHTS

THEN said Sir Gawaine and his brethren unto Arthur, Sir, an ye will give us leave, we will go and seek our brother. Nay, said Sir Launcelot, that shall ye not need; and so said 15 Sir Baudwin of Britain: for as by our advice the king shall send unto Dame Lionesse a messenger, and pray her that she will come to the court in all the haste that she may, and doubt ye not she will come; and then she may give you best counsel where ye shall find him. This is well said of you, 20 said the king. So then goodly letters were made, and the messenger sent forth, that night and day he went till he came unto the Castle Perilous. And then the lady Dame Lionesse was sent for, thereas she was with Sir Gringamore her brother and Sir Gareth. And when she understood this message, 25

she bade him ride on his way unto King Arthur, and she would come after in all goodly haste. Then when she came to Sir Gringamore and to Sir Gareth, she told them all how King Arthur had sent for her. That is because of me, said Sir 5 Gareth. Now advise me, said Dame Lionesse, what shall I say, and in what manner I shall rule me. My lady and my love, said Sir Gareth, I pray you in no wise be ye aknowen where I am^o; but well I wot my mother is there and all my brethren, and they will take upon them to seek me, I wot 10 well that they do. But this, madam, I would ye said and advised the king when he questioned with you of me. Then may ye say, this is your advice that, an it like his good grace, ye will do make a cry against the feast of the Assumption of our Lady, that what knight there proveth him best he shall 15 wield you and all your land. And if so be that he be a wedded man, that his wife shall have the degree, and a coronal of gold beset with stones of virtue to the value of a thousand pound, and a white gerfalcon.

So Dame Lionesse departed and came to King Arthur, 20 where she was nobly received, and there she was sore questioned of the king and of the Queen of Orkney. And she answered, where Sir Gareth was she could not tell. But thus much she said unto Arthur: Sir, I will let cry a tournament that shall be done before my castle at the Assumption 25 of our Lady,^o and the cry shall be this: that you, my lord Arthur, shall be there, and your knights, and I will purvey that my knights shall be against yours; and then I am sure ye shall hear of Sir Gareth. This is well advised, said King Arthur; and so she departed. And the king and she made 30 great provision to that tournament.

When Dame Lionesse was come to the Isle of Avilion,^o that was the same isle thereas her brother Sir Gringamore dwelt, then she told them all how she had done, and what

promise she had made to King Arthur. Alas, said Sir Gareth, I have been so wounded with unhappiness sithen I came into this castle that I shall not be able to do at that tournament like a knight; for I was never thoroughly whole since I was hurt. Be ye of good cheer, said the damosel Linet, for I undertake within these fifteen days to make ye whole, and as lusty as ever ye were. And then she laid an ointment and a salve to him as it pleased to her, that he was never so fresh nor so lusty. Then said the damosel Linet: Send you unto Sir Persant of Inde, and assument him and his knights to be ¹⁰ here with you as they have promised. Also, that ye send unto Sir Ironside, that is the Red Knight of the Red Launds, and charge him that he be ready with you with his whole sum of knights, and then shall ye be able to match with King Arthur and his knights. So this was done, and all knights ¹⁵ were sent for unto the Castle Perilous; and then the Red Knight answered and said unto Dame Lionesse, and to Sir Gareth, Madam, and my lord Sir Gareth, ye shall understand that I have been at the court of King Arthur, and Sir Persant of Inde and his brethren, and there we have done our homage ²⁰ as ye commanded us. Also Sir Ironside said, I have taken upon me with Sir Persant of Inde and his brethren to hold part against my lord Sir Launcelot and the knights of that court. And this have I done for the love of my lady Dame Lionesse, and you my lord Sir Gareth. Ye have well done, ²⁵ said Sir Gareth; but wit you well ye shall be full sore matched with the most noble knights of the world; therefore we must purvey us of good knights, where we may get them. That is well said, said Sir Persant, and worshipfully.

And so the cry was made in England, Wales, and Scotland, ³⁰ Ireland, Cornwall, and in all the Out Isles, and in Brittany and in many countries; that at the feast of our Lady the Assumption next coming, men should come to the Castle

Perilous beside the Isle of Avilion; and there all the knights that there came should have the choice whether them list to be on the one party with the knights of the castle, or on the other party with King Arthur. And two months was to 5 the day that the tournament should be. And so there came many good knights that were at their large, and held them for the most part against King Arthur and his knights of the Round Table and came in the side of them of the castle. For Sir Epinogris was the first, and he was the king's son of 10 Northumberland, and Sir Palamides the Saracen ^o was another, and Sir Safere his brother, and Sir Segwarides his brother, but they were christened, and Sir Malegrine another, and Sir Brian de les Isles, a noble knight, and Sir Grummore Grummursum, a good knight of Scotland, and Sir Carados 15 of the dolorous tower, a noble knight, and Sir Turquine his brother, and Sir Arnold and Sir Gauter, two brethren, good knights of Cornwall. There came Sir Tristram de Liones, and with him Sir Dinas, the Seneschal, and Sir Sadok; but this Sir Tristram was not at that time knight of the Table 20 Round, but he was one of the best knights of the world. And so all these noble knights accompanied them with the lady of the castle, and with the Red Knight of the Red Launds; but as for Sir Gareth, he would not take upon him more but as other mean knights.

CHAPTER XXVII

HOW KING ARTHUR WENT TO THE TOURNAMENT WITH HIS KNIGHTS, AND HOW THE LADY RECEIVED HIM WORSHIPFULLY, AND HOW THE KNIGHTS ENCOUNTERED

25 AND then there came with King Arthur Sir Gawaine, Agravaine, Gaheris, his brethren. And then his nephews Sir

Uwaine le Blanchemains, and Sir Aglovale, Sir Tor, Sir Percivale de Galis, and Sir Lamorak de Galis. Then came Sir Launcelot du Lake with his brethren, nephews, and cousins, as Sir Lionel, Sir Ector de Maris, Sir Bors de Ganis, and Sir Galihodin, Sir Galihud, and many more of Sir Launce- 5 lot's blood, and Sir Dinadan, Sir La Cote Male Taile, his brother, a good knight, and Sir Sagramore, a good knight; and all the most part of the Round Table. Also there came with King Arthur these knights, the King of Ireland, King Agwisance, and the King of Scotland, King Carados and 10 King Uriens of the land of Gore, and King Bagdemagus and his son Sir Meliaganus, and Sir Galahault the noble prince.^o All these kings, princes, and earls, barons, and other noble knights, as Sir Brandiles, Sir Uwaine les Avoutres, and Sir Kay, Sir Bedivere, Sir Meliot de Logres, Sir Petipase of Win- 15 chelsea, Sir Godelake: all these came with King Arthur, and more that cannot be rehearsed.

Now leave we of these kings and knights, and let us speak of the great array that was made within the castle and about the castle for both parties. The lady Dame Lionesse or- 20 dained great array upon her part for her noble knights, for all manner of lodging and victual that came by land and by water, that there lacked nothing for her party, nor for the other, but there was plenty to be had for gold and silver for King Arthur and his knights. And then there came the 25 harbingers from King Arthur for to harbour him, and his kings, dukes, earls, barons, and knights. And then Sir Gareth prayed Dame Lionesse and the Red Knight of the Red Launds, and Sir Persant and his brother, and Sir Gringamore, that in no wise there should none of them tell not his 30 name, and make no more of him than of the least knight that there was, For, he said, I will not be known of neither more nor less, neither at the beginning neither at the ending.

Then Dame Lionesse said unto Sir Gareth: Sir, I will lend you a ring, but I would pray you as you love me heartily let me have it again when the tournament is done, for that ring increaseth my beauty much more than it is of himself. And 5 the virtue of my ring is that, that is green it will turn to red, and that is red it will turn in likeness to green, and that is blue it will turn to likeness of white, and that is white it will turn in likeness to blue, and so it will do of all manner of colours.^o Also who that bareth my ring shall lose no blood, and for great 10 love I will give you this ring. Gramercy, said Sir Gareth, mine own lady, for this ring is passing meet for me, for it will turn all manner of likeness that I am in, and that shall cause me that I shall not be known. Then Sir Gringamore gave Sir Gareth a bay courser that was a passing good horse; 15 also he gave him good armour and sure, and a noble sword that sometime Sir Gringamore's father won upon an heathen tyrant. And so thus every knight made him ready to that tournament. And King Arthur was come two days to-fore the Assumption of our Lady. And there was all manner of 20 royalty of all minstrelsy that might be found. Also there came Queen Guenever and the Queen of Orkney, Sir Gareth's mother.^o

CHAPTER XXXV

OF THE GREAT ROYALTY, AND WHAT OFFICERS WERE MADE
AT THE FEAST OF THE WEDDING, AND OF THE JOUSTS
AT THE FEAST

So it drew fast to Michaelmas^o; and thither came Dame Lionesse, the lady of the Castle Perilous, and her sister, 25 Dame Linet, with Sir Gringamore, her brother, with them, for he had the conduct of these ladies. And there they were

lodged at the device of King Arthur.^o And upon Michaelmas Day the Bishop of Canterbury made the wedding betwixt Sir Gareth and the Lady Lionesse with great solemnity. And King Arthur made Gaheris to wed the Damosel Savage, that was Dame Linet; and King Arthur made Sir Agravaine 5 to wed Dame Lionesse's niece, a fair lady, her name was Dame Laurel.^o

And so when this solemnization was done, then came in the Green Knight, Sir Pertolepe, with thirty knights, and there he did homage and fealty to Sir Gareth, and these 10 knights to hold of him for evermore. Also Sir Pertolepe said: I pray you that at this feast I may be your chamberlain. With a good will, said Sir Gareth, sith it liketh you to take so simple an office. Then came in the Red Knight, with three score knights with him, and did to Sir Gareth homage 15 and fealty, and all those knights to hold of him for evermore. And then this Sir Perimones prayed Sir Gareth to grant him to be his chief butler at that high feast. I will well, said Sir Gareth, that ye have this office, and it were better.^o Then came in Sir Persant of Inde, with an hundred knights with 20 him, and there he did homage and fealty, and all his knights should do him service, and hold their lands of him for ever; and there he prayed Sir Gareth to make him his sewer-chief at the feast. I will well, said Sir Gareth, that ye have it, and it were better. Then came the Duke de la Rowse,^o with 25 an hundred knights with him, and there he did homage and fealty to Sir Gareth, and so to hold their lands of him for ever. And he required Sir Gareth that he might serve him of the wine that day of that feast. I will well, said Sir Gareth, and it were better. Then came in the Red Knight of the Red 30 Launds, that was Sir Ironside, and he brought with him three hundred knights,^o and there he did homage and fealty, and all these knights to hold their lands of him for ever. And

then he asked Sir Gareth to be his carver. I will well, said Sir Gareth, an it please you.

Then came into the court thirty ladies, and all they seemed widows, and those thirty ladies brought with them many fair 5 gentlewomen. And all they kneeled down at once unto King Arthur and unto Sir Gareth, and there all those ladies told the king how Sir Gareth delivered them from the dolorous tower, and slew the Brown Knight without Pity^o: And therefore we, and our heirs for evermore, will do homage unto Sir 10 Gareth of Orkney. So then the kings and queens, princes and earls, barons and many bold knights, went unto meat; and well may ye wit there were all manner of meat plenteously, all manner revels and games, with all manner of minstrelsy that was used in those days. Also there was great jousts 15 three days. But the king would not suffer Sir Gareth to joust, because of his new bride; for, as the French book saith, that Dame Lionesse desired of the king that none that were wedded should joust at that feast.

So the first day there jested Sir Lamorak de Galis, for 20 he overthrew thirty knights, and did passing marvellously deeds of arms; and then King Arthur made Sir Persant and his two brethren Knights of the Round Table to their lives' end, and gave them great lands. Also the second day there jested Tristram best, and he overthrew forty knights, and 25 did there marvellous deeds of arms. And there King Arthur made Ironside, that was the Red Knight of the Red Launds, a Knight of the Table Round to his life's end, and gave him great lands. The third day there jested Sir Launcelot du Lake, and he overthrew fifty knights, and did many mar- 30 vellous deeds of arms, that all men wondered on him. And there King Arthur made the Duke de la Rowse a Knight of the Round Table to his life's end, and gave him great lands to spend. But when these jousts were done, Sir Lamorak

and Sir Tristram departed suddenly, and would not be known, for the which King Arthur and all the court were sore displeased. And so they held the court forty days with great solemnity. And this Sir Gareth was a noble knight, and a well-ruled, and fair languaged. 5

Thus endeth this tale of Sir Gareth of Orkney that wedded Dame Lionesse of the Castle Perilous. And also Sir Gaheris wedded her sister, Dame Linet, that was called the Damosel Savage, and Sir Agravaine wedded Dame Laurel, a fair lady and great, and mighty lands with great riches gave with them King Arthur, that royally they might live till their lives' end.

BOOK XIII

CHAPTER I

HOW AT THE VIGIL OF THE FEAST OF PENTECOST ENTERED INTO
THE HALL BEFORE KING ARTHUR A DAMOSEL, AND DESIRED
SIR LAUNCELOT FOR TO COME AND DUB A KNIGHT, AND
HOW HE WENT WITH HER

At the vigil of Pentecost,^o when all the fellowship of the Round Table were come unto Camelot^o and there heard their service, and the tables were set ready to the meat, right so entered into the hall a full fair gentlewoman on 5 horseback, that had ridden full fast, for her horse was all besweated. Then she there alighted, and came before the king and saluted him; and he said: Damosel, God thee bless. Sir, said she, for God's sake say me where Sir Launcelot is. Yonder ye may see him, said the king. Then she 10 went unto Launcelot and said: Sir Launcelot, I salute you on King Pelles'^o behalf, and I require you come on with me hereby into a forest. Then Sir Launcelot asked her with whom she dwelled. I dwell, said she, with King Pelles. What will ye with me? said Launcelot. Ye shall know, 15 said she, when ye come thither. Well, said he, I will gladly go with you. So Sir Launcelot bade his squire saddle his horse and bring his arms; and in all haste he did his commandment.

Then came the queen unto Launcelot, and said: Will ye

leave us at this high feast? Madam, said the gentlewoman, wit ye well he shall be with you to-morn by dinner time. If I wist, said the queen, that he should not be with us here to-morn he should not go with you by my good will. Right so departed Sir Launcelot with the gentlewoman, and rode 5 until that he came into a forest and into a great valley, where they saw an abbey of nuns; and there was a squire ready and opened the gates, and so they entered and descended off their horses; and there came a fair fellowship about Sir Launcelot, and welcomed him, and were passing glad of his 10 coming. And then they led him unto the Abbess's chamber and unarmed him; and right so he was ware upon a bed lying two of his cousins, Sir Bors and Sir Lionel,^o and then he waked them; and when they saw him they made great joy. Sir, said Sir Bors unto Sir Launcelot, what adventure hath 15 brought you hither, for we weened to-morn to have found you at Camelot? As God me help, said Sir Launcelot, a gentlewoman brought me hither, but I know not the cause.

In the meanwhile that they thus stood talking together, therein came twelve nuns that brought with them Galahad,^o 20 the which was passing fair and well made, that unnethe in the world men might not find his match: and all those ladies wept. Sir, said they all, we bring you here this child the which we have nourished, and we pray you to make him a knight, for of a more worthier man's hand may he not receive 25 the order of knighthood. Sir Launcelot beheld the young squire and saw him seemly and demure as a dove, with all manner of good features, that he weened of his age never to have seen so fair a man of form. Then said Sir Launcelot: Cometh this desire of himself? He and all they said yea. 30 Then shall he, said Sir Launcelot, receive the high order of knighthood as to-morn at the reverence of the high feast. That night Sir Launcelot had passing good cheer; and on the

morn at the hour of prime, at Galahad's desire, he made him knight and said: God make him a good man, for of beauty faileth you not as any that liveth.

CHAPTER II

HOW THE LETTERS WERE FOUND WRITTEN IN THE SIEGE
PERILOUS, AND OF THE MARVELLOUS ADVENTURE OF THE
SWORD IN A STONE

Now fair sir, said Sir Launcelot, will ye come with me
5 unto the court of King Arthur? Nay, said he, I will not
go with you as at this time. Then he departed from them
and took his two cousins with him, and so they came unto
Camelot by the hour of underne on Whitsunday. By that
time the king and the queen were gone to the minster to hear
10 their service. Then the king and the queen were passing
glad of Sir Bors and Sir Lionel, and so was all the fellowship.
So when the king and all the knights were come from service,
the barons espied in the sieges of the Round Table all about,
written with golden letters: Here ought to sit he, and he
15 ought to sit here. And thus they went so long till that they
came to the Siege Perilous,^o where they found letters newly
written of gold which said: Four hundred winters and four
and fifty accomplished after the passion of our Lord Jesu
Christ ought this siege to be fulfilled. Then all they said:
20 This is a marvellous thing and an adventurous. In the name
of God, said Sir Launcelot; and then accompted the term of
the writing from the birth of our Lord unto that day. It
seemeth me, said Sir Launcelot, this siege ought to be fulfilled
this same day, for this is the feast of Pentecost after the four
25 hundred and four and fifty year^o; and if it would please all
parties, I would none of these letters were seen this day, till

he be come that ought to enchieve this adventure. Then made they to ordain a cloth of silk, for to cover these letters in the Siege Perilous.

Then the king bade haste unto dinner. Sir, said Sir Kay the Steward, if ye go now unto your meat ye shall break your old custom of your court, for ye have not used on this day to sit at your meat or that ye have seen some adventure.^o Ye say sooth, said the king, but I had so great joy of Sir Launcelot and of his cousins, which be come to the court whole and sound, so that I bethought me not of mine old custom. So, as they stood speaking, in came a squire and said unto the king: Sir, I bring unto you marvellous tidings. What be they? said the king. Sir, there is here beneath at the river a great stone which I saw fleet above the water, and therein I saw sticking a sword. The king said: I will see that marvel. So all the knights went with him, and when they came to the river they found there a stone fleeting, as it were of red marble, and therein stuck a fair rich sword, and in the pommel thereof were precious stones wrought with subtle letters of gold. Then the barons read the letters which said in this wise: Never shall man take me hence, but only he by whose side I ought to hang, and he shall be the best knight of the world.^o

When the king had seen the letters, he said unto Sir Launcelot: Fair Sir, this sword ought to be yours, for I am sure ye be the best knight of the world. Then Sir Launcelot answered full soberly: Certes, sir, it is not my sword; also, Sir, wit ye well I have no hardiness to set my hand to it, for it longed not to hang by my side. Also, who that assayeth to take the sword and faileth of it, he shall receive a wound by that sword that he shall not be whole long after. And I will that ye wit that this same day shall the adventures of the Sangreal, that is called the Holy Vessel, begin.^o

CHAPTER III

HOW SIR GAWAINE ASSAYED TO DRAW OUT THE SWORD, AND
HOW AN OLD MAN BROUGHT IN GALAHAD

Now, fair nephew, said the king unto Sir Gawaine, assay ye, for my love. Sir, he said, save your good grace I shall not do that. Sir, said the king, assay to take the sword and at my commandment. Sir, said Gawaine, your commandment I will obey. And therewith he took up the sword by the handles, but he might not stir it. I thank you, said the king to Sir Gawaine. My lord Sir Gawaine, said Sir Launcelot, now wit ye well this sword shall touch you so sore^o that ye shall will ye had never set your hand thereto for the best castle of this realm. Sir, he said, I might not withsay mine uncle's will and commandment. But when the king heard this he repented it much, and said unto Sir Percivale^o that he should assay, for his love. And he said: Gladly, for to bear Sir Gawaine fellowship. And therewith he set his hand on the sword and drew it strongly, but he might not move it. Then were there no¹ mo that durst be so hardy to set their hands thereto. Now may ye go to your dinner, said Sir Kay unto the king, for a marvellous adventure have ye seen. So the king and all went unto the court, and every knight knew his own place, and set him therein, and young men that were knights served them.

So when they were served, and all sieges fulfilled save only the Siege Perilous, anon there befell a marvellous adventure, that all the doors and windows of the palace shut by themself. Not for then the hall was not greatly darked; and therewith they were¹ all¹ abashed both one and other.

¹ Omitted by Caxton, supplied from W. de Worde.

Then King Arthur spake first and said: By God, fair fellows and lords, we have seen this day marvels, but or night I suppose we shall see greater marvels.

In the meanwhile came in a good old man, and an ancient, clothed all in white, and there was no knight knew from whence he came. And with him he brought a young knight, both on foot, in red arms,^o without sword or shield, save a scabbard hanging by his side. And these words he said: Peace be with you, fair lords. Then the old man said unto Arthur: Sir, I bring here a young knight, the which is of ^{ro} king's lineage, and of the kindred of Joseph of Aramathe,^o whereby the marvels of this court, and of strange realms, shall be fully accomplished.

CHAPTER IV

HOW THE OLD MAN BROUGHT GALAHAD TO THE SIEGE PERILOUS AND SET HIM THEREIN, AND HOW ALL THE KNIGHTS MARVELLED

THE king was right glad of his words, and said unto the good man: Sir, ye be right welcome, and the young knight ¹⁵ with you. Then the old man made the young man to unarm him, and he was in a coat of red sendal, and bare a mantle upon his shoulder that was furred with ermine, and put that upon him. And the old knight said unto the young knight: Sir, follow me. And anon he led him unto the Siege Perilous, ²⁰ where beside sat Sir Launcelot; and the good man lift up the cloth, and found there letters that said thus: This is the siege of Galahad, the haut prince. Sir, said the old knight, wit ye well that place is yours. And then he set him down surely in that siege. And then he said to the old man: ²⁵

Sir, ye may now go your way, for well have ye done that ye were commanded to do ; and recommend me unto my grand-sire, King Pelles, and unto my lord Petchere,^o and say them on my behalf, I shall come and see them as soon as ever I 5 may. So the good man departed ; and there met him twenty noble squires, and so took their horses and went their way.

Then all the knights of the Table Round marvelled greatly of Sir Galahad, that he durst sit there in that Siege Perilous, and was so tender of age ; and wist not from whence he came 10 but all only by God ; and said : This is he by whom the Sangreal shall be enchieved, for there sat never none but he, but he were mischieved. Then Sir Launcelot beheld his son and had great joy of him. Then Bors told his fellows : Upon pain of my life this young knight shall come unto great 15 worship. This noise was great in all the court, so that it came to the queen. Then she had marvel what knight it might be that durst adventure him to sit in the Siege Perilous. Many said unto the queen he resembled much unto Sir Launcelot. I may well suppose, said the queen, that Sir 20 Launcelot begat him on King Pelles' daughter by enchantment,^o and his name is Galahad. I would fain see him, said the queen, for he must needs be a noble man, for so is his father that him begat, I report me unto all the Table Round.

25 So when the meat was done that the king and all were risen, the king yede unto the Siege Perilous and lift up the cloth, and found there the name of Galahad ; and then he shewed it unto Sir Gawayne, and said : Fair nephew, now have we among us Sir Galahad, the good knight that shall worship 30 us all ; and upon pain of my life he shall enchieve the Sangreal, right as Sir Launcelot had done us to understand. Then came King Arthur unto Galahad and said : Sir, ye be welcome, for ye shall move many good knights to the quest

of the Sangreal, and ye shall enchieve that never knights might bring to an end. Then the king took him by the hand, and went down from the palace to shew Galahad the adventures of the stone.

CHAPTER V

HOW KING ARTHUR SHEWED THE STONE HOVING ON THE WATER TO GALAHAD, AND HOW HE DREW OUT THE SWORD

THE queen heard thereof, and came after with many ladies, 5 and shewed them the stone where it hoved on the water. Sir, said the king unto Sir Galahad, here is a great marvel as ever I saw, and right good knights have assayed and failed. Sir, said Galahad, that is no marvel, for this adventure is not theirs but mine ; and for the surety of this sword I brought 10 none with me, for here by my side hangeth the scabbard. And anon he laid his hand on the sword, and lightly drew it out of the stone, and put it in the sheath, and said unto the king : Now it goeth better than it did aforehand. Sir, said the king, a shield God shall send you. Now have I that 15 sword that sometime was the good knight's, Balin le Savage, and he was a passing good man of his hands ; and with this sword he slew his brother Balan, and that was great pity, for he was a good knight, and either slew other through a dolorous stroke that Balin gave unto my grandfather King Pelles, 20 the which is not yet whole, nor not shall be till I heal him.°

Therewith the king and all espied where came riding down the river a lady on a white palfrey toward them. Then she saluted the king and the queen, and asked if that Sir Launcelot was there. And then he answered himself : I am here, 25 fair lady. Then she said all with weeping : How your great doing is changed sith this day in the morn. Damosel, why

say you so ? said Launcelot. I say you sooth, said the damosel, for ye were this day the best knight of the world, but who should say so now, he should be a liar, for there is now one better than ye, and well it is proved by the adventures 5 of the sword whereto ye durst not set to your hand ; and that is the change and leaving of your name. Wherefore I make unto you a remembrance, that ye shall not ween from henceforth that ye be the best knight of the world. As touching unto that, said Launcelot, I know well I was never the best.
10 Yes, said the damosel, that were ye, and are yet, of any sinful man of the world. And, Sir king, Nacien, the hermit,° sendeth thee word, that thee shall befall the greatest worship that ever befell king in Britain ; and I say you wherefore, for this day the Sangreal appeared in thy house and fed thee
15 and all thy fellowship of the Round Table. So she departed and went that same way that she came.

CHAPTER VI

HOW KING ARTHUR HAD ALL THE KNIGHTS TOGETHER FOR
TO JOUST IN THE MEADOW BESIDE CAMELOT OR THEY DE-
PARTED

Now, said the king, I am sure at this quest of the Sangreal shall all ye of the Table Round depart, and never shall I see you again whole together ; therefore I will see you all whole 20 together in the meadow of Camelot to joust and to tourney, that after your death men may speak of it that such good knights were wholly together such a day. As unto that counsel and at the king's request they accorded all, and took on their harness that longed unto jousting. But all this 25 moving of the king was for this intent, for to see Galahad

proved ; for the king deemed he should not lightly come again unto the court after his departing. So were they assembled in the meadow, both more and less. Then Sir Galahad, by the prayer of the king and the queen, did upon him a noble jesseraunce, and also he did on his helm, but shield would 5 he take none for no prayer of the king. And then Sir Gawaine and other knights prayed him to take a spear. Right so he did ; and the queen was in a tower with all her ladies, for to behold that tournament. Then Sir Galahad dressed him in midst of the meadow, and began to break 10 spears marvellously, that all men had wonder of him ; for he there surmounted all other knights, for within a while he had defouled many good knights of the Table Round save twain, that was Sir Launcelot and Sir Percivale.

CHAPTER VII

HOW THE QUEEN DESIRED TO SEE GALAHAD ; AND HOW AFTER,
ALL THE KNIGHTS WERE REPLENISHED WITH THE HOLY
SANGREAL, AND HOW THEY AVOWED THE ENQUEST OF THE
SAME

THEN the king, at the queen's request, made him to alight 15 and to unlace his helm, that the queen might see him in the visage. When she beheld him she said : Soothly I dare well say that Sir Launcelot begat him, for never two men resembled more in likeness, therefore it nis no marvel though he be of great prowess. So a lady that stood by the queen said : 20 Madam, for God's sake, ought he of right to be so good a knight ? Yea, forsooth, said the queen, for he is of all parties come of the best knights of the world and of the highest lineage ; for Sir Launcelot is come but of the eighth degree from

our Lord Jesu Christ, and Sir Galahad is of the ninth degree from our Lord Jesu Christ, therefore I dare say they be the greatest gentlemen of the world.

And then the king and all estates went home unto Camelot, 5 and so went to evensong to the great minster, and so after upon that to supper, and every knight sat in his own place as they were toforehand. Then anon they heard crackling and crying of thunder, that them thought the place should all to-drive. In the midst of this blast entered a sunbeam more 10 clearer by seven times than ever they saw day, and all they were alighted of the grace of the Holy Ghost. Then began every knight to behold other, and either saw other, by their seeming, fairer than ever they saw afore. Not for then there was no knight might speak one word a great while, and so 15 they looked every man on other as they had been dumb.

Then there entered into the hall the Holy Grail^o covered with white samite, but there was none might see it, nor who bare it. And there was all the hall fulfilled with good odours, and every knight had such meats and drinks as he best loved 20 in this world. And when the Holy Grail had been borne through the hall, then the holy vessel departed suddenly, that they wist not where it became : then had they all breath to speak. And then the king yielded thankings to God, of His good grace that he had sent them. Certes, said 25 the king, we ought to thank our Lord Jesu greatly for that he hath shewed us this day, at the reverence of this high feast of Pentecost.

Now, said Sir Gawaine, we have been served this day of what meats and drinks we thought on ; but one thing be- 30 guiled us, we might not see the Holy Grail, it was so preciously covered. Wherefore I will make here avow^o that to-morn, without longer abiding, I shall labour in the quest of the Sangreal, that I shall hold me out a twelvemonth and a day,

or more if need be, and never shall I return again unto the court till I have seen it more openly than it hath been seen here ; and if I may not speed I shall return again as he that may not be against the will of our Lord Jesu Christ.

When they of the Table Round heard Sir Gawaine say 5 so, they arose up the most part and made such avows as Sir Gawaine had made. Anon as King Arthur heard this he was greatly displeased, for he wist well they might not again-say their avows. Alas, said King Arthur unto Sir Gawaine, ye have nigh slain me with the avow and promise 10 that ye have made ; for through you ye have bereft me the fairest fellowship and the truest of knighthood that ever were seen together in any realm of the world ; for when they depart from hence I am sure they all shall never meet more in this world, for they shall die many in the quest. And so it for- 15 thinketh me a little, for I have loved them as well as my life, wherefore it shall grieve me right sore, the departition of this fellowship : for I have had an old custom to have them in my fellowship.^o

CHAPTER VIII

HOW GREAT SORROW WAS MADE OF THE KING AND THE QUEEN
AND LADIES FOR THE DEPARTING OF THE KNIGHTS, AND
HOW THEY DEPARTED

AND therewith the tears fell in his eyes. And then he 20 said : Gawaine, Gawaine, ye have set me in great sorrow, for I have great doubt that my true fellowship shall never meet here more again. Ah, said Sir Launcelot, comfort yourself ; for it shall be unto us a great honour and much more than if we died in any other places, for of death we be 25

siker. Ah, Launcelot, said the king, the great love that I have had unto you all the days of my life maketh me to say such doleful words ; for never Christian king had never so many worthy men at his table as I have had this day at the 5 Round Table, and that is my great sorrow.

When the queen, ladies, and gentlewomen, wist these tidings, they had such sorrow and heaviness that there might no tongue tell it, for those knights had held them in honour and chierté. But among all other Queen Guenever made 10 great sorrow. I marvel, said she, my lord would suffer them to depart from him. Thus was all the court troubled for the love of the partition of those knights. And many of those ladies that loved knights would have gone with their lovers ; and so had they done, had not an old knight come among 15 them in religious clothing ; and then he spake all on high and said : Fair lords, which have sworn in the quest of the Sangreal, thus sendeth you Nacien, the hermit, word, that none in this quest lead lady nor gentlewoman with him, for it is not to do in so high a service as they labour in ; for I warn you 20 plain, he that is not clean of his sins he shall not see the mysteries of our Lord Jesu Christ. And for this cause they left these ladies and gentlewomen.

After this the queen came unto Galahad and asked him of whence he was, and of what country. He told her of whence 25 he was. And son unto Launcelot, she said he was. As to that, he said neither yea nor nay. So God me help, said the queen, of your father ye need not to shame you, for he is the goodliest knight, and of the best men of the world come, and of the strain, of all parties, of kings. Wherefore ye ought 30 of right to be, of your deeds, a passing good man ; and certainly, she said, ye resemble him much. Then Sir Galahad was a little ashamed and said : Madam, sith ye know in certain, wherefore do ye ask it me ? for he that is my father

shall be known openly and all betimes. And then they went to rest them. And in the honour of the highness of Galahad he was led into King Arthur's chamber, and there rested in his own bed.

And as soon as it was day the king arose, for he had no rest 5 of all that night for sorrow. Then he went unto Gawaine and to Sir Launcelot that were arisen for to hear mass. And then the king again said : Ah Gawaine, Gawaine, ye have betrayed me ; for never shall my court be amended by you, but ye will never be sorry for me as I am for you. And therewith the 10 tears began to run down by his visage. And therewith the king said : Ah, knight Sir Launcelot, I require thee thou counsel me, for I would that this quest were undone, an it might be. Sir, said Sir Launcelot, ye saw yesterday so many worthy knights that then were sworn that they may not 15 leave it in no manner of wise. That wot I well, said the king, but it shall so heavy me at their departing that I wot well there shall no manner of joy remedy me. And then the king and the queen went unto the minster. So anon Launcelot and Gawaine commanded their men to bring their arms. And 20 when they all were armed save their shields and their helms, then they came to their fellowship, which were all ready in the same wise, for to go to the minster to hear their service.

Then after the service was done the king would wit how many had undertaken the quest of the Holy Grail ; 25 and to accompt them he prayed them all. Then found they by the tale an hundred and fifty, and all were knights of the Round Table. And then they put on their helms and departed, and recommended them all wholly unto the queen ; and there was weeping and great sorrow. Then 30 the queen departed into her chamber and held her, so that no man should perceive her great sorrows. When Sir Launcelot missed the queen he went till her chamber, and

when she saw him she cried aloud : O Launcelot, Launcelot, ye have betrayed me and put me to the death, for to leave thus my lord. Ah, madam, I pray you be not displeased, for I shall come again as soon as I may with my worship. Alas, 5 said she, that ever I saw you ; but he that suffered upon the cross for all mankind, he be unto you good conduct and safety, and all the whole fellowship.

Right so departed Sir Launcelot, and found his fellowship that abode his coming. And so they mounted upon their 10 horses and rode through the streets of Camelot ; and there was weeping of rich and poor, and the king turned away and might not speak for weeping. So within a while they came to a city, and a castle that hight Vagon. There they entered into the castle, and the lord of that castle was an old man that 15 hight Vagon,^o and he was a good man of his living, and set open the gates, and made them all the cheer that he might. And so on the morn they were all accorded that they should depart everych from other ; and on the morn they departed with weeping cheer, and every knight took the way that him 20 liked best.

CHAPTER IX

HOW GALAHAD GAT HIM A SHIELD, AND HOW THEY SPED THAT PRESUMED TO TAKE DOWN THE SAID SHIELD

Now rideth Sir Galahad yet without shield, and so he rode four days without any adventure. And at the fourth day after evensong he came to a White Abbey, and there he was received with great reverence, and led unto a chamber, and 25 there was he unarmed ; and then was he ware of two¹ knights of the Table Round, one was Sir Bagdemagus,^o and¹

¹ Omitted by Caxton, supplied from W. de Worde.

that ¹ other ¹ was Sir Uwaine.^o And when they saw him they went unto Galahad and made of him great solace, and so they went unto supper. Sirs, said Sir Galahad, what adventure brought you hither? Sir, said they, it is told us that within this place is a shield that no man may bear about his neck 5 but he be mischieved outhere dead within three days, or maimed for ever. Ah sir, said King Bagdemagus, I shall it bear tomorrow for to assay this adventure. In the name of God, said Sir Galahad. Sir, said Bagdemagus, an I may not en-
chieve the adventure of this shield ye shall take it upon you, 10 for I am sure ye shall not fail. Sir, said Galahad, I right well agree me thereto, for I have no shield. So on the morn they arose and heard mass. Then Bagdemagus asked where the adventurous shield was. Anon a monk led him behind an altar where the shield hung as white as any snow, but in 15 the midst was a red cross. Sir, said the monk, this shield ought not to be hanged about no knight's neck but he be the worthiest knight of the world; therefore I counsel you knights to be well advised. Well, said Bagdemagus, I wot well that I am not the best knight of the world, but yet I 20 shall assay to bear it, and so bare it out of the minster. And then he said unto Galahad: An it please you abide here still, till ye wit how that I speed. I shall abide you, said Galahad. Then King Bagdemagus took with him a good squire, to bring tidings unto Sir Galahad how he sped. 25

Then when they had ridden a two mile and came to a fair valley afore an hermitage, then they saw a knight come from that part in white armour, horse and all; and he came as fast as his horse might run, and his spear in his rest, and Bagdemagus dressed his spear against him and brake it 30 upon the white knight. But the other struck him so hard that he brast the mails, and sheef him through the right shoul-

¹ Omitted by Caxton, supplied from W. de Worde.

der, for the shield covered him not as at that time ; and so he bare him from his horse. And therewith he alighted and took the white shield from him, saying : Knight, thou hast done thyself great folly, for this shield ought not to be borne but by him that shall have no peer that liveth. And then he came to Bagdemagus' squire and said : Bear this shield unto the good knight Sir Galahad, that thou left in the abbey, and greet him well by me. Sir, said the squire, what is your name ? Take thou no heed of my name, said the knight, for it is not for thee to know nor for none earthly man. Now, fair sir, said the squire, at the reverence of Jesu Christ, tell me for what cause this shield may not be borne but if the bearer thereof be mischieved. Now sith thou hast conjured me so, said the knight, this shield behoveth unto no man but unto Galahad. And the squire went unto Bagdemagus and asked whether he were sore wounded or not. Yea forsooth, said he, I shall escape hard from the death. Then he fetched his horse, and brought him with great pain unto an abbey. Then was he taken down softly and unarmed, and laid in a bed, and there was looked to his wounds. And as the book telleth, he lay there long, and escaped hard with the life.

CHAPTER X

HOW GALAHAD DEPARTED WITH THE SHIELD, AND HOW KING EVELAKE HAD RECEIVED THE SHIELD OF JOSEPH OF ARAMATHIE

SIR GALAHAD, said the squire, that knight that wounded Bagdemagus sendeth you greeting, and bade that ye should bear this shield, wherethrough great adventures should befall. Now blessed be God and fortune, said Galahad.

And then he asked his arms, and mounted upon his horse, and hung the white shield about his neck, and commended them unto God. And Sir Uwaine said he would bear him fellowship if it pleased him. Sir, said Galahad, that may ye not, for I must go alone, save this squire shall bear me fellowship : and so departed Uwaine.

Then within a while came Galahad thereas the White Knight abode him by the hermitage, and everych saluted other courteously. Sir, said Galahad, by this shield be many marvels fallen. Sir, said the knight, it befell after the passion 10 of our Lord Jesu Christ thirty-two year, that Joseph of Aramathe, the gentle knight, the which took down our Lord off the holy Cross, at that time he departed from Jerusalem with a great party of his kindred with him. And so he laboured till that they came to a city that hight Sarras.^o And at that 15 same hour that Joseph came to Sarras there was a king that hight Evelake,^o that had great war against the Saracens, and in especial against one Saracen, the which was King Evelake's cousin, a rich king and a mighty, which marched nigh this land, and his name was called Tolleme la Feintes. So on 20 a day these two met to do battle. Then Joseph, the son of Joseph of Aramathie, went to King Evelake and told him he should be discomfit and slain but if he left his belief of the old law and believed upon the new law. And then there he shewed him the right belief of the Holy Trinity, to the which 25 he agreed unto with all his heart ; and there this shield was made for King Evelake, in the name of Him that died upon the Cross. And then through his good belief he had the better of King Tolleme. For when Evelake was in the battle there was a cloth set afore the shield, and when he was in the 30 greatest peril he let put away the cloth, and then his enemies saw a figure of a man on the Cross, wherethrough they all were discomfited before that a man of King Eve-

lake's was smitten his hand off, and bare that hand in his other hand; and Joseph called that man unto him and bade him go with good devotion touch the Cross. And as soon as that man had touched the Cross with his hand it was as whole as ever it was to-fore. Then soon after there fell a great marvel, that the cross of the shield at one time vanished away that no man wist where it became. And then King Evelake was baptised, and for the most part all the people of that city. So, soon after, Joseph would depart, and King Evelake would go with him, whether he wold or nold. And so by fortune they came into this land, that at that time was called Great Britain; and there they found a great felon paynim, that put Joseph into prison. And so by fortune tidings came unto a worthy man that hight Mondrames, and he assembled all his people for the great renown he had heard of Joseph; and so he came into the land of Great Britain and disherited this felon paynim and consumed him, and therewith delivered Joseph out of prison. And after that all the people were turned to the Christian faith.

CHAPTER XI

HOW JOSEPH MADE A CROSS ON THE WHITE SHIELD WITH HIS BLOOD, AND HOW GALAHAD WAS BY A MONK BROUGHT TO A TOMB

Not long after that Joseph was laid in his deadly bed. And when King Evelake saw that he made much sorrow, and said: For thy love I have left my country, and sith ye shall depart out of this world, leave me some token of yours that I may think on you. Joseph said: That will I do full gladly; now bring me your shield that I took you

when ye went into battle against King Tolleme. Then Joseph bled sore at the nose, so that he might not by no meah be staunched. And there upon that shield he made a cross of his own blood. Now may ye see a remembrance that I love you, for ye shall never see this shield but ye shall think 5 on me, and it shall be always as fresh as it is now. And never shall man bear this shield about his neck but he shall repent it, unto the time that Galahad, the good knight, bear it ; and the last of my lineage shall have it about his neck, that shall do many marvellous deeds. Now, said King Evelake, 10 where shall I put this shield, that this worthy knight may have it ? Ye shall leave it thereas Nacien, the hermit, shall be put after his death ; for thither shall that good knight come the fifteenth day after that he shall receive the order of knighthood: and so that day that they set is this time that 15 he have his shield, and in the same abbey lieth Nacien, the hermit. And then the White Knight vanished away.

Anon as the squire had heard these words, he alighted off his hackney and kneeled down at Galahad's feet, and prayed him that he might go with him till he had made him knight. Yea,¹ 20 I would not refuse you. Then will ye make me a knight ? said the squire, and that order, by the grace of God, shall be well set in me. So Sir Galahad granted him, and turned again unto the abbey where they came from ; and there men made great joy of Sir Galahad. And anon as he was alighted 25 there was a monk brought him unto a tomb in a churchyard, where there was such a noise that who that heard it should verily nigh be mad or lose his strength: and sir, they said, we deem it is a fiend.

¹ Caxton "Yf," for which "Ye" seems the easiest emendation that will save the sense.

CHAPTER XII

OF THE MARVEL THAT SIR GALAHAD SAW AND HEARD IN THE
TOMB, AND HOW HE MADE MELIAS KNIGHT

Now lead me thither, said Galahad. And so they did, all armed save his helm. Now, said the good man, go to the tomb and lift it up. So he did, and heard a great noise; and piteously he said, that all men might hear it: Sir Galahad, the servant of Jesu Christ, come thou not nigh me, for thou shalt make me go again there where I have been so long. But Galahad was nothing afraid, but lifted up the stone; and there came out so foul a smoke, and after he saw the foulest figure leap thereout that ever he saw in the likeness of a man; and then he blessed him and wist well it was a fiend. Then heard he a voice say: Galahad, I see there environ about thee so many angels that my power may not dere thee. Right so Sir Galahad saw a body all armed lie in that tomb, and beside him a sword. Now, fair brother, said Galahad, let us remove this body, for it is not worthy to lie in this church-yard, for he was a false Christian man. And therewith they all departed and went to the abbey. And anon as he was unarmed a good man came and set him down by him and said: Sir, I shall tell you what betokeneth all that ye saw in the tomb; for that covered body betokeneth the duresse of the world, and the great sin that Our Lord found in the world. For there was such wretchedness that the father loved not the son, nor the son loved not the father; and that was one of the causes that Our Lord took flesh and blood of a clean maiden, for our sins were so great at that time that well-nigh all was wickedness. Truly, said Galahad, I believe you right well.

So Sir Galahad rested him there that night; and upon the morn he made the squire knight, and asked him his name, and of what kindred he was come. Sir, said he, men calleth me Melias de Lile, and I am the son of the King of Denmark.^o Now, fair sir, said Galahad, sith that ye be come ⁵ of kings and queens, now look that knighthood be well set in you, for ye ought to be a mirror unto all chivalry. Sir, said Sir Melias, ye say sooth. But, sir, sithen ye have made me a knight ye must of right grant me my first desire that is reasonable. Ye say sooth, said Galahad. Melias said: ¹⁰ Then that ye will suffer me to ride with you in this quest of the Sangreal, till that some adventure depart us. I grant you, sir.

Then men brought Sir Melias his armour and his spear and his horse, and so Sir Galahad and he rode forth all that week ¹⁵ or they found any adventure. And then upon a Monday in the morning, as they were departed from an abbey, they came to a cross which departed two ways, and in that cross were letters written that said thus: Now, ye knights errant, the which goeth to seek knights adventurous, see here two ways; ²⁰ that one way defendeth thee that thou ne go that way, for he shall not go out of the way again but if he be a good man and a worthy knight; and if thou go on the left hand, thou shalt not lightly there win prowess, for thou shalt in this way be soon assayed. Sir, said Melias to Galahad, if it like ²⁵ you to suffer me to take the way on the left hand, tell me, for there I shall well prove my strength. It were better, said Galahad, ye rode not that way, for I deem I should better escape in that way than ye. Nay, my lord, I pray you let me have that adventure. Take it in God's name, said Gala- ³⁰ had.

CHAPTER XIII

OF THE ADVENTURE THAT MELIAS HAD, AND HOW GALAHAD
REVENGED HIM, AND HOW MELIAS WAS CARRIED INTO AN
ABBEY

AND then rode Melias into an old forest, and therein he rode two days and more. And then he came into a fair meadow, and there was a fair lodge of boughs. And then he espied in that lodge a chair, wherein was a crown of gold, 5 subtly wrought. Also there were cloths covered upon the earth, and many delicious meats set thereon. Sir Melias beheld this adventure, and thought it marvellous, but he had no hunger, but of the crown of gold he took much keep; and therewith he stooped down and took it up, and rode 10 his way with it. And anon he saw a knight came riding after him that said : Knight, set down that crown which is not yours, and therefore defend you. Then Sir Melias blessed him and said : Fair lord of heaven, help and save thy new-made knight. And then they let their horses run 15 as fast as they might, so that the other knight smote Sir Melias through hauberk and through the left side, that he fell to the earth nigh dead. And then he took the crown and went his way; and Sir Melias lay still and had no power to stir.

20 In the meanwhile by fortune there came Sir Galahad and found him there in peril of death. And then he said : Ah Melias, who hath wounded you ? therefore it had been better to have ridden the other way. And when Sir Melias heard him speak : Sir, he said, for God's love let me not die 25 in this forest, but bear me unto the abbey here beside, that I may be confessed and have my rights. It shall be done, said

Galahad, but where is he that hath wounded you ? With that Sir Galahad heard in the leaves cry on high: Knight, keep thee from me. Ah sir, said Melias, beware, for that is he that hath slain me. Sir Galahad answered: Sir knight, come on your peril. Then either dressed to other, and came together as fast as their horses might run, and Galahad smote him so that his spear went through his shoulder, and smote him down off his horse, and in the falling Galahad's spear brake.

With that came out another knight out of the leaves, 10 and brake a spear upon Galahad or ever he might turn him. Then Galahad drew out his sword and smote off the left arm of him, so that it fell to the earth. And then he fled, and Sir Galahad pursued fast after him. And then he turned again unto Sir Melias, and there he alighted and 15 dressed him softly on his horse to-fore him, for the truncheon of his spear was in his body; and Sir Galahad stert up behind him, and held him in his arms, and so brought him to the abbey, and there unarmed him and brought him to his chamber. And then he asked his Saviour. And when he 20 had received Him he said unto Sir Galahad : Sir, let death come when it pleaseth him. And therewith he drew out the truncheon of the spear out of his body: and then he swooned.

Then came there an old monk which sometime had been 25 a knight, and beheld Sir Melias. And anon he ransacked him; and then he said unto Sir Galahad: I shall heal him of his wound, by the grace of God, within the term of seven weeks. Then was Sir Galahad glad, and unarmed him, and said he would abide there three days. And then he asked 30 Sir Melias how it stood with him. Then he said he was turned unto helping, God be thanked.

CHAPTER XIV

HOW SIR GALAHAD DEPARTED, AND HOW HE WAS COMMANDED
TO GO TO THE CASTLE OF MAIDENS TO DESTROY THE WICKED
CUSTOM

Now will I depart, said Galahad, for I have much on hand, for many good knights be full busy about it, and this knight and I were in the same quest of the Sangreal. Sir, said a good man, for his sin he was thus wounded: and I marvel,
5 said the good man, how ye durst take upon you so rich a thing as the high order of knighthood without clean confession, and that was the cause ye were bitterly wounded. For the way on the right hand betokeneth the highway of our Lord Jesu Christ, and the way of a good true good liver.
10 And the other way betokeneth the way of sinners and of misbelievers. And when the devil saw your pride and presumption, for to take you in the quest of the Sangreal, that made you to be overthrown, for it may not be enchieved but by virtuous living. Also, the writing on the cross was
15 a signification of heavenly deeds, and of knightly deeds in God's works, and no knightly deeds in worldly works. And pride is head of all deadly sins, that caused this knight to depart from Galahad. And where thou tookest the crown of gold thou sinnest in covetise and in theft: all this were
20 no knightly deeds. And this Galahad, the holy knight, the which fought with the two knights, the two knights signify the two deadly sins which were wholly in this knight Melias; and they might not withstand you, for ye are without deadly sin.
25 Now departed Galahad from thence, and betaught them all unto God. Sir Melias said: My lord Galahad, as soon

as I may ride I shall seek you. God send you health, said Galahad, and so took his horse and departed, and rode many journeys forward and backward, as adventure would lead him. And at the last it happened him to depart from a place or a castle the which was named Abblasoure^o; and he 5 had heard no mass, the which he was wont ever to hear or ever he departed out of any castle or place, and kept that for a custom. Then Sir Galahad came unto a mountain where he found an old chapel, and found there nobody, for all, all was desolate; and there he kneeled to-fore the altar, ¹⁰ and besought God of wholesome counsel. So as he prayed he heard a voice that said: Go thou now, thou adventurous knight, to the Castle of Maidens,^o and there do thou away the wicked customs.

CHAPTER XV

HOW SIR GALAHAD FOUGHT WITH THE KNIGHTS OF THE CASTLE,
AND DESTROYED THE WICKED CUSTOM

WHEN Sir Galahad heard this he thanked God, and took ¹⁵ his horse; and he had not ridden but half a mile, he saw in the valley afore him a strong castle with deep ditches, and there ran beside it a fair river that hight Severn; and there he met with a man of great age, and either saluted other, and Galahad asked him the castle's name. Fair sir, said he, ²⁰ it is the Castle of Maidens. That is a cursed castle, said Galahad, and all they that be conversant therein, for all pity is out thereof, and all hardness and mischief is therein. Therefore, I counsel you, sir knight, to turn again. Sir, said Galahad, wit you well I shall not turn again. Then looked Sir ²⁵ Galahad on his arms that nothing failed him, and then he put his shield afore him; and anon there met him seven fair

maidens, the which said unto him: Sir knight, ye ride here in a great folly, for ye have the water to pass over. Why should I not pass the water? said Galahad. So rode he away from them and met with a squire that said: Knight, 5 those knights in the castle defy you, and defenden you ye go no further till that they wit what ye would. Fair sir, said Galahad, I come for to destroy the wicked custom of this castle. Sir, an ye will abide by that ye shall have enough to do. Go you now, said Galahad, and haste my needs.

10 Then the squire entered into the castle. And anon after there came out of the castle seven knights, and all were brethren. And when they saw Galahad they cried: Knight, keep thee, for we assure thee nothing but death. Why, said Galahad, will ye all have ado with me at once? Yea, said they, thereto 15 mayst thou trust. Then Galahad put forth his spear and smote the foremost to the earth, that near he brake his neck. And therewithal the other smote him on his shield great strokes, so that their spears brake. Then Sir Galahad drew out his sword, and set upon them so hard that it was marvel 20 to see it, and so through great force he made them to forsake the field; and Galahad chased them till they entered into the castle, and so passed through the castle at another gate.

And there met Sir Galahad an old man clothed in religious clothing, and said: Sir, have here the keys of this castle. 25 Then Sir Galahad opened the gates, and saw so much people in the streets that he might not number them, and all said: Sir, ye be welcome, for long have we abiden here our deliverance. Then came to him a gentlewoman and said: These knights be fled, but they will come again this night, and here 30 to begin again their evil custom. What will ye that I shall do? said Galahad. Sir, said the gentlewoman, that ye send after all the knights hither that hold their lands of this castle, and make them to swear for to use the customs that were

used heretofore of old time. I will well, said Galahad. And there she brought him an horn of ivory, bounden with gold richly, and said: Sir, blow this horn which will be heard two mile about this castle. When Sir Galahad had blown the horn he set him down upon a bed.

5

Then came a priest to Galahad, and said: Sir, it is past a seven year agone that these seven brethren came into this castle, and harboured with the lord of this castle, that hight the Duke Lianour, and he was lord of all this country. And when they espied the duke's daughter, that was a full fair ¹⁰ woman, then by their false covin they made debate betwixt themself, and the duke of his goodness would have departed them, and there they slew him and his eldest son. And then they took the maiden and the treasure of the castle. And then by great force they held all the knights of this castle ¹⁵ against their will under their obeissance, and in great service and truage, robbing and pilling the poor common people of all that they had. So it happened on a day the duke's daughter said: Ye have done unto me great wrong to slay mine own father, and my brother, and thus to hold our lands: not for ²⁰ then, she said, ye shall not hold this castle for many years, for by one knight ye shall be overcome. Thus she prophesied seven years agone. Well, said the seven knights, sithen ye say so, there shall never lady nor knight pass this castle but they shall abide maugre their heads, or die therefore, till ²⁵ that knight be come by whom we shall lose this castle. And therefore is it called the Maidens' Castle, for they have devoured many maidens. Now, said Galahad, is she here for whom this castle was lost? Nay sir, said the priest, she was dead within these three nights after; and sithen have they ³⁰ kept her younger sister, which endureth great pains with mo other ladies.

By this were the knights of the country come, and then he

made them do homage and fealty to the king's daughter, and set them in great ease of heart. And in the morn there came one to Galahad and told him how that Gawaine, Gareth, and Uwaine, had slain the seven brethren. I suppose well, 5 said Sir Galahad, and took his armour and his horse, and commended them unto God.

CHAPTER XVI

HOW SIR GAWAINE CAME TO THE ABBEY FOR TO FOLLOW GALAHAD, AND HOW HE WAS SHRIVEN TO A HERMIT

Now, saith the tale, after Sir Gawaine departed, he rode many journeys, both toward and foward. And at the last he came to the abbey where Sir Galahad had the white 10 shield, and there Sir Gawaine learned the way to sewe after Sir Galahad; and so he rode to the abbey where Melias lay sick, and there Sir Melias told Sir Gawaine of the marvellous adventures that Sir Galahad did. Certes, said Sir Gawaine, I am not happy that I took not the way that he went, for 15 an I may meet with him I will not depart from him lightly, for all marvellous adventures Sir Galahad enchieveth. Sir, said one of the monks, he will not of your fellowship. Why? said Sir Gawaine. Sir, said he, for ye be wicked and sinful, and he is full blessed. Right as they thus stood talking there 20 came in riding Sir Gareth. And then they made joy either of other. And on the morn they heard mass, and so departed. And by the way they met with Sir Uwaine les Avoutres, and there Sir Uwaine told Sir Gawaine how he had met with none adventure sith he departed from the court. Nor we, 25 said Sir Gawaine. And either promised other of the three 1 knights not to depart while they were in that quest, but if fortune caused it.

So they departed and rode by fortune till that they came by the Castle of Maidens; and there the seven brethren espied the three knights, and said: Sithen, we be flemed by one knight from this castle, we shall destroy all the knights of King Arthur's that we may overcome, for the love of Sir 5 Galahad. And therewith the seven knights set upon the three knights, and by fortune Sir Gawaine slew one of the brethren, and each one of his fellows slew another, and so slew the remnant. And then they took the way under the castle, and there they lost the way that Sir Galahad rode, 10 and there everych of them departed from other; and Sir Gawaine rode till he came to an hermitage, and there he found the good man saying his evensong of Our Lady; and there Sir Gawaine asked harbour for charity, and the good man granted it him gladly.

15

Then the good man asked him what he was. Sir, he said, I am a knight of King Arthur's that am in the quest of the Sangreal, and my name is Sir Gawaine. Sir, said the good man, I would wit how it standeth betwixt God and you. Sir, said Sir Gawaine, I will with a good will shew you my 20 life if it please you; and there he told the hermit how a monk of an abbey called me wicked knight. He might well say it, said the hermit, for when ye were first made knight ye should have taken you to knightly deeds and virtuous living, and ye have done the contrary, for ye have lived mischievously 25 many winters; and Sir Galahad is a maid and sinned never, and that is the cause he shall enchieve where he goeth that ye nor none such shall not attain, nor none in your fellowship, for ye have used the most untruest life that ever I heard knight live. For certes had ye not been so wicked as ye are, never 30 had the seven brethren been slain by you and your two fellows. For Sir Galahad himself alone beat them all seven the day to-fore, but his living is such he shall slay no man

lightly. Also I may say you the Castle of Maidens betokeneth the good souls that were in prison afore the Incarnation of Jesu Christ. And the seven knights betoken the seven deadly sins^o that reigned that time in the world; and I may liken the 5 good Galahad unto the son of the High Father, that lighted within a maid, and bought all the souls out of thrall, so did Sir Galahad deliver all the maidens out of the woful castle.

Now, Sir Gawaine, said the good man, thou must do penance for thy sin. Sir, what penance shall I do? Such as I 10 will give, said the good man. Nay, said Sir Gawaine, I may do no penance; for we knights adventurous oft suffer great woe and pain. Well, said the good man, and then he held his peace. And on the morn Sir Gawaine departed from the hermit, and betaught him unto God. And by adventure he 15 met with Sir Aglovale and Sir Griflet,^o two knights of the Table Round. And they two rode four days without finding of any adventure, and at the fifth day they departed. And everych held as fell them by adventure. Here leaveth the tale of Sir Gawaine and his fellows, and speak we of Sir 20 Galahad.

CHAPTER XVII

HOW SIR GALAHAD MET WITH SIR LAUNCELOT AND SIR PERCIVALE, AND SMOTE THEM DOWN, AND DEPARTED FROM THEM

So when Sir Galahad was departed from the Castle of Maidens he rode till he came to a waste forest, and there he met with Sir Launcelot and Sir Percivale, but they knew him not, for he was new disguised. Right so Sir Launcelot, his 25 father, dressed his spear and brake it upon Sir Galahad, and Galahad smote him so again that he smote down horse and man. And then he drew his sword, and dressed him unto

Sir Percivale, and smote him so on the helm, that it rove to the coif of steel; and had not the sword swerved Sir Percivale had been slain, and with the stroke he fell out of his saddle. This jousts was done to-fore the hermitage where a recluse dwelled. And when she saw Sir Galahad ride, 5 she said: God be with thee, best knight of the world. Ah certes, said she, all aloud that Launcelot and Percivale might hear it: An yonder two knights had known thee as well as I do they would not have encountered with thee. Then Sir Galahad heard her say so he was adread to be known: there- 10 with he smote his horse with his spurs and rode a great pace froward them. Then perceived they both that he was Galahad; and up they gat on their horses, and rode fast after him, but in a while he was out of their sight. And then they turned again with heavy cheer. Let us spere some tidings, said Per- 15 civale, at yonder recluse. Do as ye list, said Sir Launcelot.

When Sir Percivale came to the recluse she knew him well enough, and Sir Launcelot both. But Sir Launcelot rode overthwart and endlong in a wild forest, and held no path but as wild adventure led him. And at the last he came to 20 a stony cross which departed two ways in waste land; and by the cross was a stone that was of marble, but it was so dark that Sir Launcelot might not wit what it was. Then Sir Launcelot looked by him, and saw an old chapel, and there he weened to have found people; and Sir Launcelot tied his 25 horse till a tree, and there he did off his shield and hung it upon a tree, and then went to the chapel door, and found it waste and broken. And within he found a fair altar, full richly arrayed with cloth of clean silk, and there stood a fair clean candlestick, which bare six great candles, and the candle- 30 stick was of silver. And when Sir Launcelot saw this light he had great will for to enter into the chapel, but he could find no place where he might enter; then was he passing heavy

and dismayed. Then he returned and came to his horse and did off his saddle and bridle, and let him pasture, and unlaced his helm, and ungirt his sword, and laid him down to sleep upon his shield to-fore the cross.

CHAPTER XVIII

HOW SIR LAUNCELOT, HALF SLEEPING AND HALF WAKING, SAW
A SICK MAN BORNE IN A LITTER, AND HOW HE WAS HEALED
WITH THE SANGREAL

5 AND so he fell asleep; and half waking and sleeping he saw come by him two palfreys all fair and white, the which bare a litter, therein lying a sick knight. And when he was nigh the cross he there abode still. All this Sir Launcelot saw and beheld, for he slept not verily; and he heard him
10 say: O sweet Lord, when shall this sorrow leave me? and when shall the holy vessel come by me, wherethrough I shall be blessed? For I have endured thus long, for little trespass. A full great while complained the knight thus, and always Sir Launcelot heard it. With that Sir Launcelot saw the
15 candlestick with the six tapers come before the cross, and he saw nobody that brought it. Also there came a table of silver, and the holy vessel of the Sangreal, which Launcelot had seen aforetime in King Pescheour's house.^o And therewith the sick knight set him up, and held up both his hands, and
20 said: Fair sweet Lord, which is here within this holy vessel; take heed unto me that I may be whole of this malady. And therewith on his hands and on his knees he went so nigh that he touched the holy vessel and kissed it, and anon he was whole; and then he said: Lord God, I thank thee, for I am
25 healed of this sickness.

So when the holy vessel had been there a great while it went unto the chapel with the chandelier and the light, so that Launcelot wist not where it was become; for he was overtaken with sin that he had no power to rise again the holy vessel; wherefore after that many men said of him shame, 5 but he took repentance after that. Then the sick knight dressed him up and kissed the cross; anon his squire brought him his arms, and asked his lord how he did. Certes, said he, I thank God right well, through the holy vessel I am healed. But I have marvel of this sleeping knight that had no power 10 to awake when this holy vessel was brought hither. I dare right well say, said the squire, that he dwelleth in some deadly sin whereof he was never confessed. By my faith, said the knight, whatsoever he be he is unhappy, for as I deem he is of the fellowship of the Round Table, the which is entered 15 into the quest of the Sangreal. Sir, said the squire, here I have brought you all your arms save your helm and your sword, and therefore by mine assent now may ye take this knight's helm and his sword: and so he did. And when he was clean armed he took Sir Launcelot's horse, for he was 20 better than his; and so departed they from the cross.

CHAPTER XIX

HOW A VOICE SPOKE TO SIR LAUNCELOT, AND HOW HE FOUND HIS HORSE AND HIS HELM BORNE AWAY, AND AFTER WENT AFOOT

THEN anon Sir Launcelot waked, and set him up, and bethought him what he had seen there, and whether it were dreams or not. Right so heard he a voice that said: Sir Launcelot, more harder than is the stone, and more bitter 25

than is the wood, and more naked and barer than is the leaf of the fig tree; therefore go thou from hence, and withdraw thee from this holy place. And when Sir Launcelot heard this he was passing heavy and wist not what to do, and so 5 departed sore weeping, and cursed the time that he was born. For then he deemed never to have had worship more. For those words went to his heart, till that he knew wherefore he was called so. Then Sir Launcelot went to the cross and found his helm, his sword, and his horse taken away. And 10 then he called himself a very wretch, and most unhappy of all knights; and there he said: My sin and my wickedness have brought me unto great dishonour. For when I sought worldly adventures for worldly desires, I ever enchieved them and had the better in every place, and never was I discomfit 15 in no quarrel, were it right or wrong. And now I take upon me the adventures of holy things, and now I see and understand that mine old sin hindereth me and shameth me, so that I had no power to stir nor speak when the holy blood appeared afore me. So thus he sorrowed till it was day, 20 and heard the fowls sing^o: then somewhat he was comforted. But when Sir Launcelot missed his horse and his harness then he wist well God was displeased with him.

Then he departed from the cross on foot into a forest; and so by prime he came to an high hill, and found an hermitage and a hermit therein which was going unto mass. 25 And then Launcelot kneeled down and cried on Our Lord mercy for his wicked works. So when mass was done Launcelot called him, and prayed him for charity for to hear his life. With a good will, said the good man. Sir, said he, be ye of 30 King Arthur's court and of the fellowship of the Round Table? Yea forsooth, and my name is Sir Launcelot du Lake that hath been right well said of, and now my good fortune is changed, for I am the most wretch of the world. The hermit

beheld him and had marvel how he was so abashed. Sir, said the hermit, ye ought to thank God more than any knight living, for He hath caused you to have more worldly worship than any knight that now liveth. And for your presumption to take upon you in deadly sin for to be in His presence, where 5 His flesh and His blood was, that caused you ye might not see it with worldly eyes; for He will not appear where such sinners be, but if it be unto their great hurt and unto their great shame; and there is no knight living now that ought to give God so great thank as ye, for He hath given you 10 beauty, seemliness, and great strength above all other knights; and therefore ye are the more beholding unto God than any other man, to love Him and dread Him, for your strength and manhood will little avail you an God be against you.

CHAPTER XX

HOW SIR LAUNCELOT WAS SHRIVEN, AND WHAT SORROW HE
MADE, AND OF THE GOOD ENSAMPLES WHICH WERE
SHEWED HIM

THEN Sir Launcelot wept with heavy cheer, and said: Now 15 I know well ye say me sooth. Sir, said the good man, hide none old sin from me. Truly, said Sir Launcelot, that were me full loath to discover. For this fourteen year I never discovered one thing that I have used, and that may I now wite my shame and my disadventure. And then he told there that 20 good man all his life. And how he had loved a queen unmeasurably and out of measure long. And all my great deeds of arms that I have done, I did for the most part for the queen's sake, and for her sake would I do battle were it right or wrong; and never did I battle all only for God's sake, but 25

for to win worship and to cause me to be the better beloved, and little or nought I thanked God of it. Then Sir Launcelot said: I pray you counsel me. I will counsel you, said the hermit, if ye will ensure me that ye will never come in that 5 queen's fellowship as much as ye may forbear. And then Sir Launcelot promised him he nold, by the faith of his body. Look that your heart and your mouth accord, said the good man, and I shall ensure you ye shall have more worship than ever ye had.

10 Holy father, said Sir Launcelot, I marvel of the voice that said to me marvellous words, as ye have heard to-forehand. Have ye no marvel, said the good man, thereof, for it seemeth well God loveth you; for men may understand a stone is hard of kind, and namely one more than another; and that is to 15 understand by thee, Sir Launcelot, for thou wilt not leave thy sin for no goodness that God hath sent thee; therefore thou art more than any stone, and never wouldst thou be made nesh nor by water nor by fire, and that is the heat of the Holy Ghost may not enter in thee. Now take heed, in all the 20 world men shall not find one knight to whom Our Lord hath given so much of grace as He hath given you, for He hath given you fairness with seemliness, He hath given thee wit, discretion to know good from evil, He hath given thee prowess and hardiness, and given thee to work so largely that thou 25 hast had at all days the better wheresoever thou came; and now Our Lord will suffer thee no longer, but that thou shalt know Him whether thou wilt or nylt. And why the voice called thee bitterer than wood, for where overmuch sin dwelleth, there may be but little sweetness, wherefore thou 30 art likened to an old rotten tree.

Now have I shewed thee why thou art harder than the stone and bitterer than the tree. Now shall I shew thee why thou art more naked and barer than the fig tree. It befell that Our

Lord on Palm Sunday preached in Jerusalem, and there He found in the people that all hardness was harboured in them, and there He found in all the town not one that would harbour him. And then He went without the town, and found in midst of the way a fig tree, the which was right fair and 5 well garnished of leaves, but fruit had it none. Then Our Lord cursed the tree that bare no fruit; that betokeneth the fig tree unto Jerusalem, that had leaves and no fruit.^o So thou, Sir Launcelot, when the Holy Grail was brought afore thee, He found in thee no fruit, nor good thought nor good 10 will, and defouled with lechery. Certes, said Sir Launcelot, all that you have said is true, and from henceforward I cast me, by the grace of God, never to be so wicked as I have been, but as to follow knighthood and to do feats of arms.

Then the good man enjoined Sir Launcelot such penance 15 as he might do and to sewe knighthood, and so assoiled him, and prayed Sir Launcelot to abide with him all that day. I will well, said Sir Launcelot, for I have neither helm, nor horse, nor sword. As for that, said the good man, I shall help you or to-morn at even of an horse, and all that longed unto 20 you. And then Sir Launcelot repented him greatly.

Here leaveth off the history of Sir Launcelot

BOOK XVII

CHAPTER I

HOW SIR GALAHAD FOUGHT AT A TOURNAMENT, AND HOW HE
WAS KNOWN OF SIR GAWAINE AND SIR ECTOR DE MARIS

Now saith this story, when Galahad had rescued Percivale from the twenty knights,^o he yede tho into a waste forest wherein he rode many journeys; and he found many adventures the which he brought to an end, whereof the story maketh here no mention. Then he took his way to the sea on a day, and it befell as he passed by a castle where was a wonder tournament, but they without had done so much that they within were put to the worse, yet were they within good knights enough. When Galahad saw that those within were at so great a mischief that men slew them at the entry of the castle, then he thought to help them, and put a spear forth and smote the first that he fell to the earth, and the spear brake to pieces. Then he drew his sword and smote thereas they were thickest, and so he did wonderful deeds of arms that all they marvelled. Then it happed that Gawaine and Sir Ector de Maris^o were with the knights without. But when they espied the white shield with the red cross the one said to the other: Yonder is the good knight, Sir Galahad, the haut prince: now he should be a great fool which should

meet with him to fight. So by adventure he came by Sir Gawaine, and he smote him so hard that he clave his helm and the coif of iron unto his head, so that Gawaine fell to the earth; but the stroke was so great that it slanted down to the earth and carved the horse's shoulder in two. 5

When Ector saw Gawaine down he drew him aside, and thought it no wisdom for to abide him, and also for natural love, that he was his uncle. Thus through his great hardness he beat aback all the knights without. And then they within came out and chased them all about. But when 10 Galahad saw there would none turn again he stole away privily, so that none wist where he was become. Now by my head, said Gawaine to Ector, now are the wonders true that were said of Launcelot du Lake,^o that the sword which stuck in the stone should give me such a buffet that I would 15 not have it for the best castle in this world; and soothly now it is proved true, for never ere had I such a stroke of man's hand. Sir, said Ector, meseemeth your quest is done. And yours is not done, said Gawaine, but mine is done, I shall seek no further. Then Gawaine was borne into a castle and 20 unarmed him, and laid him in a rich bed, and a leech found that he might live, and to be whole within a month. Thus Gawaine and Ector abode together, for Sir Ector would not away till Gawaine were whole.

And the good knight, Galahad, rode so long till he came 25 that night to the Castle of Carboneck^o; and it befell him thus that he was benighted in an hermitage. So the good man was fain when he saw he was a knight-errant. Tho when they were at rest there came a gentlewoman knocking at the door, and called Galahad, and so the good man came to the door 30 to wit what she would. Then she called the hermit: Sir Ulfin,^o I am a gentlewoman that would speak with the knight which is with you. Then the good man awaked Galahad,

and bade him: Arise, and speak with a gentlewoman that seemeth hath great need of you. Then Galahad went to her and asked her what she would. Galahad, said she, I will that ye arm you, and mount upon your horse and follow me, for
5 I shall show you within these three days the highest adventure that ever any knight saw. Anon Galahad armed him, and took his horse, and commended him to God, and bade the gentlewoman go, and he would follow thereas she liked.

CHAPTER II

HOW SIR GALAHAD RODE WITH A DAMOSEL, AND CAME TO THE
SHIP WHEREAS SIR BORS AND SIR PERCIVALE WERE IN

So she rode as fast as her palfrey might bear her, till that
10 she came to the sea, the which was called Collibe.^o And at the night they came unto a castle in a valley, closed with a running water, and with strong walls and high; and so she entered into the castle with Galahad, and there had he great cheer, for the lady of that castle was the damosel's
15 lady. So when he was unarmed, then said the damosel: Madam, shall we abide here all this day? Nay, said she, but till he hath dined and till he hath slept a little. So he ate and slept a while till that the maid called him, and armed him by torchlight. And when the maid was horsed and he
20 both, the lady took Galahad a fair child and rich; and so they departed from the castle till they came to the seaside; and there they found the ship where Bors and Percivale were in, the which cried on the ship's board: Sir Galahad, ye be welcome, we have abiden you long. And when he heard
25 them he asked them what they were. Sir, said she, leave your horse here, and I shall leave mine; and took their saddles

and their bridles with them, and made a cross on them, and so entered into the ship. And the two knights received them both with great joy, and everych knew other; and so the wind arose, and drove them through the sea in a marvellous pace. And within a while it dawned.

Then did Galahad off his helm and his sword, and asked of his fellows from whence came that fair ship. Truly, said they, ye wot as well as we, but of God's grace; and then they told everych to other of all their hard adventures, and of their great temptations. Truly, said Galahad, ye are much ¹⁰ bounden to God, for ye have escaped great adventures; and had not the gentlewoman been I had not come here, for as for you I weened never to have found you in these strange countries. Ah Galahad, said Bors, if Launcelot, your father, were here then were we well at ease, for then meseemed we ¹⁵ failed nothing. That may not be, said Galahad, but if it pleased Our Lord.

By then the ship went from the land of Logris,^o and by adventure it arrived up betwixt two rocks passing great and marvellous; but there they might not land, for there ²⁰ was a swallow of the sea, save there was another ship, and upon it they might go without danger. Go we thither, said the gentlewoman, and there shall we see adventures, for so is Our Lord's will. And when they came thither they found the ship rich enough, but they found neither man nor woman ²⁵ therein. But they found in the end of the ship two fair letters written, which said a dreadful word and a marvellous: Thou man, which shall enter into this ship, beware thou be in steadfast belief, for I am Faith, and therefore beware how thou enterest, for an thou fail I shall not help thee. Then ³⁰ said the gentlewoman: Percivale, wot ye what I am? Certes, said he, nay, to my witting. Wit ye well, said she, that I am thy sister, which am daughter of King Pellinore, and therefore

wit ye well ye are the man in the world that I most love; and if ye be not in perfect belief of Jesu Christ enter not in no manner of wise, for then should ye perish the ship, for he is so perfect he will suffer no sinner in him. When Percivale
5 understood that she was his very sister he was inwardly glad, and said: Fair sister, I shall enter therein, for if I be a mis-creature or an untrue knight there shall I perish.

CHAPTER III

HOW SIR GALAHAD ENTERED INTO THE SHIP, AND OF A FAIR
BED THEREIN, WITH OTHER MARVELLOUS THINGS, AND
OF A SWORD

IN the meanwhile Galahad blessed him, and entered there-
in; and then next the gentlewoman, and then Sir Bors and
10 Sir Percivale. And when they were in, it was so marvellous
fair and rich that they marvelled; and in midst of the ship
was a fair bed, and Galahad went thereto, and found there
a crown of silk. And at the feet was a sword, rich and fair,
and it was drawn out of the sheath half a foot and more;
15 and the sword was of divers fashions, and the pommel was of
stone, and there was in him all manner of colours that any
man might find, and everych of the colours had divers vir-
tues; and the scales of the haft were of two ribs of divers
beasts, the one beast was a serpent which was conversant
20 in Calidone,^o and is called the Serpent of the fiend; and the
bone of him is of such a virtue that there is no hand that
handleth him shall never be weary nor hurt. And the other
beast is a fish which is not right great, and haunteth the flood
of Euphrates; and that fish is called Ertanax, and his bones
25 be of such a manner of kind that who that handleth them

shall have so much will that he shall never be weary, and he shall not think on joy nor sorrow that he hath had, but only that thing that he beholdeth before him. And as for this sword there shall never man begrip him at the handles but one; but he shall pass all other. In the name of God, said 5 Percivale, I shall assay to handle it. So he set his hand to the sword, but he might not begrip it. By my faith, said he, now have I failed. Bors set his hand thereto and failed.

Then Galahad beheld the sword and saw letters like blood that said: Let see who shall assay to draw me out of my 10 sheath, but if he be more hardier than any other; and who that draweth me, wit ye well that he shall never fail of shame of his body, or to be wounded to the death. By my faith, said Galahad, I would draw this sword out of the sheath, but the offending is so great that I shall not set my hand 15 thereto. Now sirs, said the gentlewoman, wit ye well that the drawing of this sword is warned to all men save all only to you. Also this ship arrived in the realm of Logris; and that time was deadly war between King Labor, which was father unto the maimed king, and King Hurlame,^o which was 20 a Saracen. But then was he newly christened, so that men held him afterward one of the wittiest men of the world. And so upon a day it befell that King Labor and King Hurlame had assembled their folk upon the sea where this ship was arrived; and there King Hurlame was discomfit, and his 25 men slain; and he was afeard to be dead, and fled to his ship, and there found this sword and drew it, and came out and found King Labor, the man in the world of all Christendom in whom was then the greatest faith. And when King Hurlame saw King Labor he dressed this sword, and smote him 30 upon the helm so hard that he clave him and his horse to the earth with the first stroke of his sword. And it was in the realm of Logris; and so befell great pestilence and great harm

to both realms. For sithen increased neither corn, nor grass, nor well-nigh no fruit, nor in the water was no fish; wherefore men call it the lands of the two marches, the waste land, for that dolorous stroke. And when King Hurlame saw this
5 sword so carving, he turned again to fetch the scabbard, and so came into this ship and entered, and put up the sword in the sheath. And as soon as he had done it he fell down dead afore the bed. Thus was the sword proved, that none
10 ne drew it but he were dead or maimed. So lay he there till a maiden came into the ship and cast him out, for there was no man so hardy of the world to enter into that ship for the defence.

CHAPTER IV

OF THE MARVELS OF THE SWORD AND OF THE SCABBARD

AND then beheld they the scabbard, it seemed to be of a serpent's skin, and thereon were letters of gold and silver.
15 And the girdle was but poorly to come to, and not able to sustain such a rich sword. And the letters said: He which shall wield me ought to be more harder than any other, if he bear me as truly as me ought to be borne. For the body of him which I ought to hang by, he shall not be shamed
20 in no place while he is girt with this girdle, nor never none be so hardy to do away this girdle; for it ought not be done away but by the hands of a maid, and that she be a king's daughter and queen's, and she must be a maid all the days of her life, both in will and in deed. And if she break her vir-
25 ginity she shall die the most villainous death that ever died any woman. Sir, said Percivale, turn this sword that we may see what is on the other side. And it was red as blood, with black letters as any coal, which said: He that shall praise

me most, most shall he find me to blame at a great need; and to whom I should be most debonair shall I be most felon, and that shall be at one time.

Fair brother, said she to Percivale, it befell after a forty year after the passion of Jesu Christ that Nacien, the brother- 5 in-law of King Mordrains,° was borne into a town more than fourteen days' journey from his country, by the commandment of Our Lord, into an isle, into the parts of the West, that men cleped the Isle of Turnance°. So befell it that he found this ship at the entry of a rock, and he found the bed 10 and this sword as we have heard now. Not for then he had not so much hardiness to draw it; and there he dwelled an eight days, and at the ninth day there fell a great wind which departed him out of the isle, and brought him to another isle by a rock, and there he found the greatest giant that ever 15 man might see. Therewith came that horrible giant to slay him; and then he looked about him and might not flee, and he had nothing to defend him with. So he ran to his sword, and when he saw it naked he praised it much, and then he shook it, and therewith he brake it in the midst. Ah, said 20 Nacien, the thing that I most praised ought I now most to blame, and therewith he threw the pieces of his sword over his bed. And after he leapt over the board to fight with the giant, and slew him.

And anon he entered into the ship again, and the wind 25 arose, and drove him through the sea, that by adventure he came to another ship where King Mordrains was, which had been tempted full evil with a fiend in the Port of Perilous Rock. And when that one saw the other they made great joy of other, and either told other of their adventure, and 30 how the sword failed him at his most need. When Mordrains saw the sword he praised it much: But the breaking was not to do but by wickedness of thy selfward, for thou art in

some sin. And there he took the sword, and set the pieces together, and they soldered as fair as ever they were to-fore; and there put he the sword in the sheath, and laid it down on the bed. Then heard they a voice that said: Go out of this ship a little while, and enter into the other, for dread ye fall in deadly sin, for and ye be found in deadly sin ye may not escape but perish: and so they went into the other ship. And as Nacien went over the board he was smitten with a sword on the right foot, that he fell down noseling to the ship's board; and therewith he said: O God, how am I hurt. And then there came a voice and said: Take thou that for thy forfeit that thou didst in drawing of this sword, therefore thou receivest a wound, for thou were never worthy to handle it, as the writing maketh mention. In the name of God, said 15 Galahad, ye are right wise of these works.

CHAPTER V

HOW KING PELLES WAS SMITTEN THROUGH BOTH THIGHS
BECAUSE HE DREW THE SWORD, AND OTHER MARVELLOUS
HISTORIES

SIR, said she, there was a king that hight Pelles, the maimed king. And while he might ride he supported much Christendom and Holy Church. So upon a day he hunted in a wood of his which lasted unto the sea; and at 20 the last he lost his hounds and his knights save only one: and there he and his knight went till that they came toward Ireland, and there he found the ship. And when he saw the letters and understood them, yet he entered, for he was right perfect of his life, but his knight had none hardiness to enter; 25 and there found he this sword, and drew it out as much as ye

may see. So therewith entered a spear wherewith he was smitten him through both the thighs, and never sith might he be healed, nor nought shall to-fore we come to him. Thus, said she, was not King Pelles, your grandsire, maimed for his hardiness^o ? In the name of God, damosel, said Galahad. 5

So they went toward the bed to behold all about it, and above the head there hung two swords. Also there were two spindles which were as white as any snow, and other that were as red as blood, and other above green as any emerald : of these three colours were the spindles, and of natural 10 colour within, and without any painting. These spindles, said the damosel, were when sinful Eve came to gather fruit, for which Adam and she were put out of paradise, she took with her the bough on which the apple hung on. Then perceived she that the branch was fair and green, and 15 she remembered her the loss which came from the tree. Then she thought to keep the branch as long as she might. And for she had no coffer to keep it in, she put it in the earth. So by the will of Our Lord the branch grew to a great tree within a little while, and was as white as any snow, branches, 20 boughs, and leaves : that was a token a maiden planted it. And so it befell many days after, under the same tree Caym slew Abel, whereof befell great marvel. For anon as Abel had received the death under the green tree, it lost the green colour and became red; and that was in tokening of the 25 blood. And anon all the plants died thereof, but the tree grew and waxed marvellously fair, and it was the fairest tree and the most delectable that any man might behold and see; and so died the plants that grew out of it to-fore that Abel was slain under it. So long dured the tree till that Solomon, 30 King David's son, reigned, and held the land after his father. This Solomon was wise, and knew all the virtues of stones and trees, and so he knew the course of the stars, and many

other divers things. This Solomon had an evil wife, where-through he weened that there had been no good woman, and so he despised them in his books.^o So answered a voice him once: Solomon, if heaviness come to a man by a woman, 5 ne reck thou never; for yet shall there come a woman whereof there shall come greater joy to man an hundred times more than this heaviness giveth sorrow; and that woman shall be born of thy lineage. Tho when Solomon heard these words he held himself but a fool, and the truth he perceived by old 10 books. Also the Holy Ghost showed him the coming of the glorious Virgin Mary. Then asked he of the voice, if it should be in the yerde of his lineage. Nay, said the voice, but there shall come a man which shall be a maid, and the last of your blood, and he shall be as good a knight as Duke Josua, thy 15 brother-in-law.

CHAPTER VI

HOW SOLOMON TOOK DAVID'S SWORD BY THE COUNSEL OF HIS WIFE, AND OF OTHER MATTERS MARVELLOUS

Now have I certified thee of that thou stodest in doubt. Then was Solomon glad that there should come any such of his lineage; but ever he marvelled and studied who that should be, and what his name might be. His wife 20 perceived that he studied, and thought she would know it at some season; and so she waited her time, and asked of him the cause of his studying, and there he told her altogether how the voice told him. Well, said she, I shall let make a ship of the best wood and most durable that men 25 may find. So Solomon sent for all the carpenters of the land, and the best. And when they had made the ship the lady said to Solomon: Sir, said she, since it is so that this knight

ought to pass all knights of chivalry which have been to-fore him and shall come after him, moreover I shall tell you, said she, ye shall go into Our Lord's temple, where is King David's sword, your father, the which is the marvelloust and the sharpest that ever was taken in any knight's hand. 5 Therefore take that, and take off the pommel, and thereto make ye a pommel of precious stones, that it be so subtly made that no man perceivc it but that they be all one; and after make there an hilt so marvellously and wonderly that no man may know it; and after make a marvellous sheath. 10 And when ye have made all this I shall let make a girdle thereto, such as shall please me.

All this King Solomon did let make as she devised, both the ship and all the remnant. And when the ship was ready in the sea to sail, the lady let make a great bed and marvellous 15 rich, and set her upon the bed's head, covered with silk, and laid the sword at the feet, and the girdles were of hemp, and therewith the king was angry. Sir, wit ye well, said she, that I have none so high a thing which were worthy to sustain so high a sword, and a maid shall bring other knights 20 thereto, but I wot not when it shall be, nor what time. And there she let make a covering to the ship, of cloth of silk that should never rot for no manner of weather. Yet went that lady and made a carpenter to come to the tree which Abel was slain under. Now, said she, carve me out of this tree 25 as much wood as will make me a spindle. Ah madam, said he this is the tree the which our first mother planted. Do it, said she, or else I shall destroy thee. Anon as he began to work there came out drops of blood; and then would he have left, but she would not suffer him, and so he took 30 away as much wood as might make a spindle: and so she made him to take as much of the green tree and of the white tree. And when these three spindles were shapen she made

them to be fastened upon the selar of the bed. When Solomon saw his, he said to his wife : Ye have done marvellously, for though all the world were here right now, he could not devise wherefore all this was made, but Our Lord Himself ;
5 and thou that hast done it wottest not what it shall betoken. Now let it be, said she, for ye shall hear tidings sooner than ye ween. Now shall ye hear a wonderful tale of King Solomon and his wife.

CHAPTER VII

A WONDERFUL TALE OF KING SOLOMON AND HIS WIFE

THAT night lay Solomon before the ship with little fellowship. And when he was asleep him thought there came from heaven a great company of angels, and alighted into the ship, and took water which was brought by an angel, in a vessel of silver, and sprent all the ship. And after he came to the sword, and drew letters on the hilt. And
10 15 after went to the ship's board, and wrote there other letters which said : Thou man that wilt enter within me, beware that thou be full within the faith, for I ne am but Faith and Belief. When Solomon espied these letters he was abashed, so that he durst not enter, and so drew him aback; and the
20 ship was anon shoven in the sea, and he went so fast that he lost sight of him within a little while. And then a little voice said : Solomon, the last knight of thy lineage shall rest in this bed. Then went Solomon and awaked his wife, and told her of the adventures of the ship.

25 Now saith the history that a great while the three fellows beheld the bed and the three spindles. Then they were at certain that they were of natural colours without painting.

Then they lift up a cloth which was above the ground, and there found a rich purse by seeming. And Percivale took it, and found therein a writ and so he read it, and devised the manner of the spindles and of the ship, whence it came, and by whom it was made. Now, said Galahad, where shall we ⁵ find the gentlewoman that shall make new girdles to the sword ? Fair sir, said Percivale's sister, dismay you not, for by the leave of God I shall let make a girdle to the sword, such one as shall long thereto. And then she opened a box, and took out girdles which were seemly wrought with golden ¹⁰ threads, and upon that were set full precious stones, and a rich buckle of gold. Lo, lords, said she, here is a girdle that ought to be set about the sword. And wit ye well the greatest part of this girdle was made of my hair, which I loved well while that I was a woman of the world. But as soon as I wist ¹⁵ that this adventure was ordained me I clipped off my hair, and made this girdle in the name of God. Ye be well found, said Sir Bors, for certes ye have put us out of great pain, wherein we should have entered ne had your tidings been.

Then went the gentlewoman and set it on the girdle of ²⁰ the sword. Now, said the fellowship, what is the name of the sword, and what shall we call it? Truly, said she, the name of the sword is the Sword with the Strange Girdles; and the sheath, Mover of Blood; for no man that hath blood in him ne shall never see the one part of the sheath which ²⁵ was made of the Tree of Life. Then they said to Galahad: In the name of Jesu Christ, and pray you that ye gird you with this sword which hath been desired so much in the realm of Logris. Now let me begin, said Galahad, to grip this sword for to give you courage; but wit ye well it longeth ³⁰ no more to me than it doth to you. And then he gripped about it with his fingers a great deal; and then she girt him about the middle with the sword. Now reck I not though I

die, for now I hold me one of the blessed maidens of the world, which hath made the worthiest knight of the world. Damosel, said Galahad, ye have done so much that I shall be your knight all the days of my life.

5 Then they went from that ship, and went to the other. And anon the wind drove them into the sea a great pace, but they had no victuals: but it befell that they came on the morn to a castle that men call Carteloise,° that was in the marches of Scotland. And when they had passed the 10 port, the gentlewoman said: Lords, here be men arriven that, an they wist that ye were of King Arthur's court, ye should be assailed anon. Dainosel, said Galahad, He that cast us out of the rock shall deliver us from them.

CHAPTER VIII

HOW GALAHAD AND HIS FELLOWS CAME TO A CASTLE, AND HOW THEY WERE FOUGHT WITHAL, AND HOW THEY SLEW THEIR ADVERSARIES, AND OTHER MATTERS

So it befell as they spoke thus there came a squire by them, 15 and asked what they were; and they said they were of King Arthur's house. Is that sooth? said he. Now by my head, said he, ye be ill arrayed; and then turned he again unto the cliff fortress. And within a while they heard an horn blow. Then a gentlewoman came to them, and asked 20 them of whence they were; and they told her. Fair lords, said she, for God's love turn again if ye may, for ye be come unto your death. Nay, they said, we will not turn again, for He shall help us in whose service we be entered in. Then as they stood talking there came knights well armed, and bade 25 them yield them or else to die. That yielding, said they, shall

be noyous to you. And therewith they let their horses run, and Sir Percivale smote the foremost to the earth, and took his horse, and mounted thereupon, and the same did Galahad. Also Bors served another so, for they had no horses in that country, for they left their horses when they took their ship 5 in other countries. And so when they were horsed then began they to set upon them; and they of the castle fled into the strong fortress, and the three knights after them into the castle, and so alighted on foot, and with their swords slew them down, and gat into the hall. 10

Then when they beheld the great multitude of people that they had slain, they held themself great sinners. Certes, said Bors, I ween an God had loved them that we should not have had power to have slain them thus. But they have done so much against Our Lord that He would not 15 suffer them to reign no longer. Say ye not so, said Galahad, for if they misdid against God, the vengeance is not ours, but to Him which hath power thereof.

So came there out of a chamber a good man which was a priest, and bare God's body in a cup. And when he saw 20 them which lay dead in the hall he was all abashed; and Galahad did off his helm and kneeled down, and so did his two fellows. Sir, said they, have ye no dread of us, for we be of King Arthur's court. Then asked the good man how they were slain so suddenly, and they told it him. 25 Truly, said the good man, an ye might live as long as the world might endure, ne might ye have done so great an alms-deed as this. Sir, said Galahad, I repent me much, inasmuch as they were christened. Nay, repent you not, said he, for they were not christened, and I shall tell you how that I wot of this 30 castle. Here was Lord Earl Hernox° not but one year, and he had three sons, good knights of arms, and a daughter, the fairest gentlewoman that men knew. And for she cried to

her father they slew her, and took their father and put him in prison, and wounded him nigh to the death, but a cousin of hers rescued him. And then did they great untruth: they slew clerks and priests, and made beat down chapels, that Our 5 Lord's service might not be served nor said. And this same day her father sent to me for to be confessed and houseled; but such shame had never man as I had this day with the three brethren, but the earl bade me suffer, for he said they should not long endure, for three servants of Our Lord should 10 destroy them, and now it is brought to an end. And by this may ye wit that Our Lord is not displeased with your deeds. Certes, said Galahad, an it had not pleased Our Lord, never should we have slain so many men in so little a while.

And then they brought the Earl Hernoxt out of prison into 15 the midst of the hall, that knew Galahad anon, and yet he saw him never afore but by revelation of Our Lord.

CHAPTER IX

HOW THE THREE KNIGHTS, WITH PERCIVALE'S SISTER, CAME UNTO THE SAME FOREST, AND OF AN HART AND FOUR LIONS, AND OTHER THINGS

THEN began he to weep right tenderly, and said: Long have I abiden your coming, but for God's love hold me in your arms, that my soul may depart out of my body in so good a 20 man's arms as ye be. Gladly, said Galahad. And then one said on high, that all heard: Galahad, well hast thou avenged me on God's enemies. Now behoveth thee to go to the Maimed King as soon as thou mayest, for he shall receive by thee health which he hath abiden so long. And therewith the 25 soul departed from the body, and Galahad made him to be buried as him ought to be.

Right so departed the three knights, and Percivale's sister with them. And so they came into a waste forest, and there they saw afore them a white hart which four lions led. Then they took them to assent for to follow after for to know whither they repaired; and so they rode after a great pace 5 till that they came to a valley, and thereby was an hermitage where a good man dwelled, and the hart and the lions entered also. So when they saw all this they turned to the chapel, and saw the good man in a religious weed and in the armour of Our Lord, for he would sing mass of the Holy Ghost; and so 10 they entered in and heard mass. And at the secrets of the mass they three saw the hart become a man, the which mar-
velled them, and set him upon the altar in a rich siege; and saw the four lions were changed, the one to the form of a man, the other to the form of a lion, and the third to an eagle, and 15 the fourth was changed unto an ox. Then took they their siege where the hart sat, and went out through a glass window, and there was nothing perished nor broken; and they heard a voice say: In such a manner entered the Son of God in the womb of a maid Mary, whose virginity ne was perished 20 ne hurt. And when they heard these words they fell down to the earth and were astonished; and therewith was a great clearness.

And when they were come to theirself again they went to the good man and prayed him that he would say them 25 truth. What thing have ye seen? said he. And they told him all that they had seen. Ah lords, said he, ye be welcome; now wot I well ye be the good knights the which shall bring the Sangreal to an end; for ye be they unto whom Our Lord shall shew great secrets. And well ought Our Lord be signified 30 to an hart, for the hart when he is old he waxeth young again in his white skin. Right so cometh again Our Lord from death to life, for He lost earthly flesh that was the deadly

flesh, which He had taken in the womb of the blessed Virgin Mary ; and for that cause appeared Our Lord as a white hart without spot. And the four that were with Him is to understand the four evangelists which set in writing a part of Jesu 5 Christ's deeds that He did sometime when He was among you an earthly man ; for wit ye well never erst ne might no knight know the truth, for ofttimes or this Our Lord showed Him unto good men and unto good knights, in likeness of an hart, but I suppose from henceforth ye shall see no more.

10 And then they joyed much, and dwelled there all that day. And upon the Morrow when they had heard mass they departed and commended the good man to God : and so they came to a castle and passed by. So there came a knight armed after them and said : Lords, hark what I shall say to 15 you.

CHAPTER X

HOW THEY WERE DESIRED OF A STRANGE CUSTOM, THE WHICH THEY WOULD NOT OBEY; WHEREFORE THEY FOUGHT AND SLEW MANY KNIGHTS

THIS gentlewoman that ye lead with you is a maid ? Sir, said she, a maid I am. Then he took her by the bridle and said : By the Holy Cross, ye shall not escape me to-fore ye have yolden the custom of this castle. Let her go, said 20 Percivale, ye be not wise, for a maid in what place she cometh is free. So in the meanwhile there came out a ten or twelve knights armed, out of the castle, and with them came gentlewomen which held a dish of silver. And then they said : This gentlewoman must yield us the custom of this castle. Sir, 25 said a knight, what maid passeth hereby shall give this dish full of blood of her right arm. Blame have ye, said Galahad, that brought up such customs, and so God me save, I ensure

you of this gentlewoman ye shall fail while that I live. So God me help, said Percivale, I had liefer be slain. And I also, said Sir Bors. By my troth, said the knight, then shall ye die, for ye may not endure against us though ye were the best knights of the world.

Then let they run each to other, and the three fellows beat the ten knights, and then set their hands to their swords and beat them down and slew them. Then there came out of the castle a three score knights armed. Fair lords, said the three fellows, have mercy on yourself and have not ado with us. Nay, fair lords, said the knights of the castle, we counsel you to withdraw you, for ye be the best knights of the world, and therefore do no more, for ye have done enough. We will let you go with this harm, but we must needs have the custom. Certes, said Galahad, for nought speak ye. Well, said they, will ye die? We be not yet come thereto, said Galahad. Then began they to meddle together, and Galahad, with the strange girdles, drew his sword, and smote on the right hand and on the left hand, and slew what that ever abode him, and did such marvels that there was none that saw him but weened he had been none earthly man, but a monster. And his two fellows halp him passing well, and so they held the journey everych in like hard till it was night: then must they needs depart.

So came in a good knight, and said to the three fellows: If ye will come in to-night and take such harbour as here is ye shall be right welcome, and we shall ensure you by the faith of our bodies, and as we be true knights, to leave you in such estate to-morrow as we find you, without any falsehood. And as soon as ye know of the custom we dare say ye will accord therefore. For God's love, said the gentlewoman, go thither and spare not for me. Go we, said Galahad; and so they entered into the chapel. And when they were alighted

they made great joy of them. So within a while the three knights asked the custom of the castle and wherefore it was. What it is, said they, we will say you sooth.

CHAPTER XI

HOW SIR PERCIVALE'S SISTER BLED A DISH FULL OF BLOOD FOR
TO HEAL A LADY, WHEREFORE SHE DIED; AND HOW THAT
THE BODY WAS PUT IN A SHIP

THERE is in this castle a gentlewoman which we and this
5 castle is hers, and many other. So it befell many years agone
there fell upon her a malady; and when she had lain a great
while she fell unto a measles, and of no leech she could have no
remedy. But at the last an old man said an she might have
a dish full of blood of a maid and a clean virgin in will and in
10 work, and a king's daughter, that blood should be her health,
and for to anoint her withal; and for this thing was this cus-
tom made. Now, said Percivale's sister, fair knights, I see well
that this gentlewoman is but dead. Certes, said Galahad, an
ye bleed so much ye may die. Truly, said she, an I die for
15 to heal her I shall get me great worship and soul's health,
and worship to my lineage, and better is one harm than
twain. And therefore there shall be no more battle, but to-
morn I shall yield you your custom of this castle. And then
there was great joy more than there was to-fore, for else had
20 there been mortal war upon the morn; notwithstanding she
would none other, whether they wold or nold.

That night were the three fellows eased with the best;
and on the morn they heard mass, and Sir Percivale's sister
bade bring forth the sick lady. So she was, the which was
25 evil at ease. Then said she: Who shall let me blood? So
one came forth and let her blood, and she bled so much that

the dish was full. Then she lift up her hand and blessed her; and then she said to the lady: Madam, I am come to the death for to make you whole, for God's love pray for me. With that she fell in a swoon. Then Galahad and his two fellows start up to her, and lift her up and staunched her, but she had bled 5 so much that she might not live.^o Then she said when she was awaked: Fair brother Percivale, I die for the healing of this lady, so I require you that ye bury me not in this country, but as soon as I am dead put me in a boat at the next haven, and let me go as adventure will lead me; and as 10 soon as ye three come to the City of Sarras, there to enchieve the Holy Grail, ye shall find me under a tower arrived, and there bury me in the spiritual place; for I say you so much, there Galahad shall be buried, and ye also, in the same place.

Then Percivale understood these words, and granted it her, 15 weeping. And then said a voice: Lords and fellows, to-morrow at the hour of prime ye three shall depart everych from other, till the adventure bring you to the Maimed King. Then asked she her Saviour; and as soon as she had received it the soul departed from the body. So the same day was 20 the lady healed, when she was anointed withal. Then Sir Percivale made a letter of all that she had holpen them as in strange adventures, and put it in her right hand, and so laid her in a barge, and covered it with black silk; and so the wind arose, and drove the barge from the land, and all knights be- 25 held it till it was out of their sight. Then they drew all to the castle, and so forthwith there fell a sudden tempest and a thunder, lightning, and rain, as all the earth would have broken. So half the castle turned up-so-down. So it passed evensong or the tempest was ceased.

Then they saw afore them a knight armed and wounded hard in the body and in the head, that said: O God, succour me for now it is need. After this knight came another knight

and a dwarf, which cried to them afar: Stand, ye may not escape. Then the wounded knight held up his hands to God that he should not die in such tribulation. Truly, said Galahad, I shall succour him for His sake that he calleth upon. 5 Sir, said Bors, I shall do it, for it is not for you, for he is but one knight. Sir, said he, I grant. So Sir Bors took his horse, and commended him to God, and rode after, to rescue the wounded knight. Now turn we to the two fellows.

CHAPTER XII

HOW GALAHAD AND PERCIVALE FOUND IN A CASTLE MANY TOMBS OF MAIDENS THAT HAD BLED TO DEATH

Now saith the story that all night Galahad and Percivale 10 were in a chapel in their prayers, for to save Sir Bors. So on the morrow they dressed them in their harness toward the castle, to wit what was fallen of them therein. And when they came there they found neither man nor woman that he ne was dead by the vengeance of Our Lord. With that they heard a 15 voice that said: This vengeance is for blood-shedding of maidens. Also they found at the end of the chapel a church-yard, and therein might they see a threec score fair tombs and that place was so fair and so delectable that it seemed them there had been none tempest, for there lay the bodies of all the 20 good maidens which were martyred for the sick lady's sake. Also they found the names of everych, and of what blood they were come, and all were of kings' blood, and twelve of them were kings' daughters. Then they departed and went into a 25 forest. Now, said Percivale unto Galahad, we must depart, so pray we Our Lord that we may meet together in short time: then they did off their helms and kissed together, and wept at their departing.

CHAPTER XIII

HOW SIR LAUNCELOT ENTERED INTO THE SHIP WHERE SIR PERCIVALE'S SISTER LAY DEAD, AND HOW HE MET WITH SIR GALAHAD, HIS SON

Now saith the history, that when Launcelot was come to the water of Mortoise, as it is rehearsed before, he was in great peril, and so he laid him down and slept, and took the adventure that God would send him. So when he was asleep there came a vision unto him and said: Launcelot, arise up 5 and take thine armour, and enter into the first ship that thou shalt find. And when he heard these words he start up and saw great clearness about him. And then he lift up his hand and blessed him, and so took his arms and made him ready; and so by adventure he came by a strand, and found a ship 10 the which was without sail or oar. And as soon as he was within the ship there he felt the most sweetness that ever he felt, and he was fulfilled with all thing that he thought on or desired. Then he said: Fair sweet Father, Jesu Christ, I wot not in what joy I am, for this joy passeth all earthly joys that ever 15 I was in. And so in this joy he laid him down to the ship's board, and slept till day. And when he awoke he found there a fair bed, and therein lying a gentlewoman dead, the which was Sir Percivale's sister. And as Launcelot devised her, he espied in her right hand a writ, the which he 20 read, the which told him all the adventures that ye have heard to-fore, and of what lineage she was come. So with this gentlewoman Sir Launcelot was a month and more. If ye would ask how he lived, He that fed the people of Israel with manna in the desert, so was he fed; for every day when he had 25 said his prayers he was sustained with the grace of the Holy Ghost.

So on a night he went to play him by the water side, for he was somewhat weary of the ship. And then he listened and heard an horse come, and one riding upon him. And when he came nigh he seemed a knight. And so he let him pass, and 5 went thereas the ship was; and there he alighted, and took the saddle and the bridle and put the horse from him, and went into the ship. And then Launcelot dressed unto him, and said: Ye be welcome. And he answered and saluted him again, and asked him: What is your name? for much my 10 heart giveth unto you. Truly, said he, my name is Launcelot du Lake. Sir, said he, then be ye welcome, for ye were the beginner of me in this world. Ah, said he, are ye Galahad? Yea, forsooth, said he; and so he kneeled down and asked him his blessing, and after took off his helm and kissed him. And 15 there was great joy between them, for there is no tongue can tell the joy that they made either of other, and many a friendly word spoken between, as kin would, the which is no need here to be rehearsed. And there everych told other of their adventures and marvels that were befallen to them in many 20 journeys sith that they departed from the court.

Anon, as Galahad saw the gentlewoman dead in the bed, he knew her well enough, and told great worship of her, that she was the best maid living, and it was great pity of her death. But when Launcelot heard how the marvellous sword was 25 gotten, and who made it, and all the marvels rehearsed afore, then he prayed Galahad, his son, that he would show him the sword, and so he did; and anon he kissed the pommel, and the hilt, and the scabbard. Truly, said Launcelot, never erst knew I of so high adventures done, and so marvellous and strange. 30 So dwelt Launcelot and Galahad within that ship half a year, and served God daily and nightly with all their power; and often they arrived in isles far from folk, where there repaired none but wild beasts, and there they found many strange ad-

ventures and perilous, which they brought to an end ; but for those adventures were with wild beasts, and not in the quest of the Sangreal, therefore the tale maketh here no mention thereof, for it would be too long to tell of all those adventures that befell them.

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CHAPTER XIV

HOW A KNIGHT BROUGHT UNTO SIR GALAHAD A HORSE, AND
BADE HIM COME FROM HIS FATHER, SIR LAUNCELOT

So after, on a Monday, it befell that they arrived in the edge of a forest to-fore a cross ; and then saw they a knight armed all in white, and was richly horsed, and led in his right hand a white horse ; and so he came to the ship, and saluted the two knights on the High Lord's behalf, and said :
Galahad, sir, ye have been long enough with your father, come out of the ship, and start upon this horse, and go where the adventures shall lead thee in the quest of the Sangreal. Then he went to his father and kissed him sweetly, and said :
Fair sweet father, I wot not when I shall see you more till I
see the body of Jesu Christ. I pray you, said Launcelot, pray ye to the High Father that He hold me in His service. And so he took his horse, and there they heard a voice that said : Think for to do well, for the one shall never see the other before the dreadful day of doom. Now, son Galahad, said Launcelot, since we shall depart, and never see other, I pray to the High Father to conserve me and you both. Sir, said Galahad, no prayer availeth so much as yours. And therewith Galahad entered into the forest.

And the wind arose, and drove Launcelot more than a month throughout the sea, where he slept but little, but prayed to God that he might see some tidings of the Sangreal.

So it befell on a night, at midnight, he arrived afore a castle, on the back side, which was rich and fair, and there was a postern opened toward the sea, and was open without any keeping, save two lions kept the entry ; and the moon shone 5 clear. Anon Sir Launcelot heard a voice that said : Launcelot, go out of this ship and enter into the castle, where thou shalt see a great part of thy desire. Then he ran to his arms, and so armed him, and so went to the gate and saw the lions. Then set he hand to his sword and drew it. Then 10 there came a dwarf suddenly, and smote him on the arm so sore that the sword fell out of his hand. Then heard he a voice say : O man of evil faith and poor belief, wherefore trowest thou more on thy harness than in thy Maker, for He might more avail thee than thine armour, in whose service that thou 15 art set. Then said Launcelot : Fair Father Jesu Christ, I thank thee of Thy great mercy that Thou reprovest me of my misdeed ; now see I well that ye hold me for your servant. Then took he again his sword and put it up in his sheath, and made a cross in his forehead, and came to the lions, and 20 they made semblaunt to do him harm. Notwithstanding he passed by them without hurt, and entered into the castle to the chief fortress, and there were they all at rest. Then Launcelot entered in so armed, for he found no gate nor door but it was open. And at the last he found a chamber whereof 25 the door was shut, and he set his hand thereto to have opened it, but he might not.

CHAPTER XV

HOW SIR LAUNCELOT WAS TO-FORE THE DOOR OF THE CHAMBER
WHEREIN THE HOLY SANGREAL WAS

THEN he enforced him mickle to undo the door. Then he listened and heard a voice which sang so sweetly that it seemed none earthly thing ; and him thought the voice said : Joy and honour be to the Father of Heaven. Then Launcelot kneeled down to-fore the chamber, for well wist 5 he that there was the Sangreal within that chamber. Then said he : Fair sweet Father, Jesu Christ, if ever I did thing that pleased Thee, Lord for Thy pity never have me not in despite for my sins done aforetime, and that Thou show me something of that I seek. And with that he saw the chamber 10 door open, and there came out a great clearness, that the house was as bright as all the torches of the world had been there.

So came he to the chamber door, and would have entered. And anon a voice said to him : Flee, Launcelot, and enter not, for thou oughtest not to do it ; and if thou enter thou 15 shalt for-think it. Then he withdrew him aback right heavy. Then looked he up in the midst of the chamber, and saw a table of silver, and the Holy Vessel, covered with red samite, and many angels about it, whereof one held a candle of wax burning, and the other held a cross, and the ornaments of an altar. 20 And before the Holy Vessel he saw a good man clothed as a priest. And it seemed that he was at the sacring of the mass. And it seemed to Launcelot that above the priest's hands were three men, whereof the two put the youngest by likeness between the priest's hands ; and so he lift it up right high, 25 and it seemed to show so to the people. And then Launcelot marvelled not a little, for him thought the priest was so

greatly charged of the figure that him seemed that he should fall to the earth. And when he saw none about him that would help him, then came he to the door a great pace, and said : Fair Father Jesu Christ, ne take it for no sin though I 5 help the good man which hath great need of help.

Right so entered he into the chamber, and came toward the table of silver ; and when he came nigh he felt a breath, that him thought it was intermeddled with fire, which smote him so sore in the visage that him thought it brent his visage ; 10 and therewith he fell to the earth, and had no power to arise, as he that was so araged, that had lost the power of his body, and his hearing, and his seeing. Then felt he many hands about him, which took him up and bare him out of the chamber door, without any amending of his swoon, and left him there, 15 seeming dead to all people.

So upon the Morrow when it was fair day they within were arisen, and found Launcelot lying afore the chamber door. All they marvelled how that he came in, and so they looked upon him, and felt his pulse to wit whether there 20 were any life in him ; and so they found life in him, but he might not stand nor stir no member that he had. And so they took him by every part of the body, and bare him into a chamber, and laid him in a rich bed, far from all folk ; and so he lay four days. Then the one said he was alive, and the 25 other said, Nay. In the name of God, said an old man, for I do you verily to wit he is not dead, but he is so full of life as the mightiest of you all ; and therefore I counsel you that he be well kept till God send him life again.

CHAPTER XVI

HOW SIR LAUNCELOT HAD LAIN FOUR-AND-TWENTY DAYS AND
AS MANY NIGHTS AS A DEAD MAN, AND OTHER DIVERS
MATTERS

IN such manner they kept Launcelot four-and-twenty days and all so many nights, that ever he lay still as a dead man; and at the twenty-fifth day befell him after midday that he opened his eyes. And when he saw folk he made great sorrow, and said: Why have ye awaked me, for I was more 5 at ease than I am now. O Jesu Christ, who might be so blessed that might see openly thy great marvels of secretness there where no sinner may be! What have ye seen? said they about him. I have seen, said he, so great marvels that no tongue may tell, and more than any heart can think, and 10 had not my son been here afore me I had seen much more.

Then they told him how he had lain there four-and-twenty days and nights. Then him thought it was punishment for the four-and-twenty years that he had been a sinner, wherefore Our Lord put him in penance four-and-twenty 15 days and nights. Then looked Sir Launcelot afore him, and saw the hair which he had borne nigh a year, for that he forthought him right much that he had broken his promise unto the hermit, which he had avowed to do. Then they asked how it stood with him. Forsooth, said he, I am whole of 20 body, thanked be Our Lord; therefore, sirs, for God's love tell me where I am. Then said they all that he was in the castle of Carbonek.

Therewith came a gentlewoman and brought him a shirt of small linen cloth, but he changed not there, but took the 25 hair to him again. Sir, said they, the quest of the Sangreal

is achieved now right in you, that never shall ye see of the Sangreal no more than ye have seen. Now I thank God, said Launcelot, of His great mercy of that I have seen, for it sufficeth me; for as I suppose no man in this world hath

5 lived better than I have done to enchieve that I have done. And therewith he took the hair and clothed him in it, and above that he put a linen shirt, and after a robe of scarlet, fresh and new. And when he was so arrayed they marvelled all, for they knew him that he was Launcelot, the good 10 knight. And then they said all: O my lord Sir Launcelot, be that ye? And he said: Truly I am he.

Then came word to King Pelles that the knight that had lain so long dead was Sir Launcelot. Then was the king right glad, and went to see him. And when Launcelot saw 15 him come he dressed him against him, and there made the king great joy of him. And there the king told him tidings that his fair daughter^o was dead. Then Launcelot was right heavy of it, and said: Sir, me forthinketh the death of your daughter, for she was a full fair lady, fresh and young. And 20 well I wot she bare the best knight that is now on the earth, or that ever was sith God was born. So the king held him there four days, and on the morrow he took his leave at King Pelles and at all the fellowship, and thanked them of their great labour.

25 Right so as they sat at their dinner in the chief salle, then was so befallen that the Sangreal had fulfilled the table with all manner of meats that any heart might think. So as they sat they saw all the doors and the windows of the place were shut without man's hand, whereof they were all 30 abashed, and none wist what to do.

And then it happed suddenly a knight came to the chief door and knocked, and cried: Undo the door. But they would not. And ever he cried: Undo; but they would not.

And at last it noyed them so much that the king himself arose and came to a window there where the knight called. Then he said : Sir knight, ye shall not enter at this time while the Sangreal is here, and therefore go into another ; for certes ye be none of the knights of the quest, but one of 5 them which hath served the fiend, and hast left the service of Our Lord : and he was passing wroth at the king's words. Sir knight, said the king, sith ye would so fain enter, say me of what country ye be. Sir, said he, I am of the realm of Logris, and my name is Ector de Maris, and brother unto my 10 lord, Sir Launcelot. In the name of God, said the king, me for-thinketh of what I have said, for your brother is here within. And when Ector de Maris understood that his brother was there, for he was the man in the world that he most dread and loved, and then he said : Ah God, now doubleth my sorrow 15 and shame. Full truly said the good man of the hill unto Gawaine and to me of our dreams.^o Then went he out of the court as fast as his horse might, and so throughout the castle.

CHAPTER XVII

HOW SIR LAUNCELOT RETURNED TOWARDS LOGRIS, AND OF OTHER ADVENTURES WHICH HE SAW IN THE WAY

THEN King Pelles came to Sir Launcelot and told him 20 tidings of his brother, whereof he was sorry, that he wist not what to do. So Sir Launcelot departed, and took his arms, and said he would go see the realm of Logris, which I have not seen in twelve months. And therewith he commended the king to God, and so rode through many realms. 25 And at the last he came to a white abbey, and there they made him that night great cheer ; and on the morn he rose and

heard mass. And afore an altar he found a rich tomb, which was newly made ; and then he took heed, and saw the sides written with gold which said : Here lieth King Bagdemagus of Gore, which King Arthur's nephew slew^o ; and named 5 him, Sir Gawaine. Then was not he a little sorry, for Launcelot loved him much more than any other, and had it been any other than Gawaine he should not have escaped from death to life ; and said to himself : Ah Lord God, this is a great hurt unto King Arthur's court, the loss of such a man. And 10 then he departed and came to the abbey where Galahad did the adventure of the tombs, and won the white shield with the red cross ; and there had he great cheer all that night.

And on the morn he turned unto Camelot, where he found King Arthur and the queen. But many of the knights of 15 the Round Table were slain and destroyed, more than half.^o And so three were come home, Ector, Gawaine, and Lionel, and many other that need not to be rehearsed. And all the court was passing glad of Sir Launcelot, and the king asked him many tidings of his son Galahad. And there Launcelot 20 told the king of his adventures that had befallen him since he departed. And also he told him of the adventures of Galahad, Percivale, and Bors, which that he knew by the letter of the dead damosel, and as Galahad had told him. Now God would, said the king, that they were all three here. 25 That shall never be, said Launcelot, for two of them shall ye never see, but one of them shall come again.

Now leaye we this story and speak of Galahad.

CHAPTER XVIII

HOW GALAHAD CAME TO KING MORDRAINS, AND OF OTHER MATTERS AND ADVENTURES

Now, saith the story, Galahad rode many journeys in vain. And at the last he came to the abbey where King Mordrains was, and when he heard that, he thought he would abide to see him. And upon the morn, when he had heard mass, Galahad came unto King Mordrains, and anon ⁵ the king saw him, which had lain blind of long time. And then he dressed him against him, and said: Galahad, the servant of Jesu Christ, whose coming I have abiden so long, now embrace me and let me rest on thy breast, so that I may rest between thine arms, for thou art a clean virgin ¹⁰ above all knights, as the flower of the lily in whom virginity is signified, and thou art the rose the which is the flower of all good virtues, and in colour of fire. For the fire of the Holy Ghost is taken so in thee that my flesh which was all dead of oldness is become young again. Then Galahad heard his ¹⁵ words, then he embraced him and all his body. Then said he: Fair Lord Jesu Christ, now I have my will. Now I require thee, in this point that I am in, thou come and visit me. And anon Our Lord heard his prayer: therewith the soul departed from the body.

And then Galahad put him in the earth as a king ought to be, and so departed and so came into a perilous forest where he found the well the which boileth with great waves, as the tale telleth to-fore. And as soon as Galahad set his hand thereto it ceased, so that it brent no more, and the heat ²⁵ departed. For that it brent it was a sign of lechery, the which was that time much used. But that heat might not abide

his pure virginity. And this was taken in the country for a miracle. And so ever after was it called Galahad's well.^o

Then by adventure he came into the country of Gore, and into the abbey where Launcelot had been to-forehand, 5 and found the tomb of King Bagdemagus, but he was founder thereof, Joseph of Aramatheie's son ; and the tomb of Simeon where Launcelot had failed. Then he looked into a croft under the minster, and there he saw a tomb which brent full marvellously. Then asked he the brethren what it was.
10 Sir, said they, a marvellous adventure that may not be brought unto none end but by him that passeth of bounty and of knighthood all them of the Round Table. I would, said Galahad, that ye would lead me thereto. Gladly, said they, and so led him till a cave. And he went down upon
15 greses, and came nigh the tomb. And then the flaming failed, and the fire staunched, the which many a day had been great. Then came there a voice that said : Much are ye behoden to thank Our Lord, the which hath given you a good hour, that ye may draw out the souls of earthly pain, and to put them
20 into the joys of paradise. I am of your kindred, the which hath dwelled in this heat this three hundred winter and four-and-fifty to be purged of the sin that I did against Joseph of Aramatheie. Then Galahad took the body in his arms and bare it into the minster. And that night lay Galahad in the
25 abbey; and on the morn he gave him service, and put him in the earth afore the high altar.

CHAPTER XIX

HOW SIR PERCIVALE AND SIR BORS MET WITH SIR GALAHAD,
AND HOW THEY CAME TO THE CASTLE OF CARBONEK, AND
OTHER MATTERS

So departed he from thence, and commended the brethren to God ; and so he rode five days till that he came to the Maimed King. And ever followed Percivale the five days, asking where he had been ; and so one told him how the adventures of Logris were enchieved. So on a day it befell 5 that they came out of a great forest, and there they met at traverse with Sir Bors, the which rode alone. It is none need to tell if they were glad ; and them he saluted, and they yielded him honour and good adventure, and everych told other. Then said Bors : It is mo than a year and an half 10 that I ne lay ten times where men dwelled, but in wild forests and in mountains, but God was ever my comfort.

Then rode they a great while till that they came to the castle of Carbonek. And when they were entered within the castle King Pelles knew them ; then there was great 15 joy, for they wist well by their coming that they had fulfilled the quest of the Sangreal. Then Eliazar, King Pelles' son, brought to-fore them the broken sword wherewith Joseph was stricken through the thigh. Then Bors set his hand thereto, if that he might have soldered it again ; but it would not be. 20 Then he took it to Percivale, but he had no more power thereto than he. Now have ye it again, said Percivale to Galahad, for an it be ever enchieved by any bodily man ye must do it. And then he took the pieces and set them together, and they seemed that they had never been broken, 25 and as well as it had been first forged. And when they

within espied that the adventure of the sword was enchieved, then they gave the sword to Bors, for it might not be better set ; for he was a good knight and a worthy man.

And a little afore even the sword arose great and marvellous, 5 and was full of great heat that many men fell for dread. And anon alighted a voice among them, and said : They that ought not to sit at the table of Jesu Christ arise, for now shall very knights be fed. So they went thence, all save King Pelles and Eliazar, his son, the which were holy men, and a 10 maid which was his niece ; and so these three fellows and they three were there, no mo. Anon they saw knights all armed came in at the hall door, and did off their helms and their arms, and said unto Galahad : Sir, we have hied right much for to be with you at this table where the holy meat shall be departed. 15 Then said he : Ye be welcome, but of whence be ye ? So three of them said they were of Gaul, and other three said they were of Ireland, and the other three said they were of Denmark. So as they sat thus there came out a bed of tree, of a chamber, the which four gentlewomen brought ; and in the 20 bed lay a good man sick, and a crown of gold upon his head ; and there in the midst of the place they set him down, and went again their way. Then he lift up his head, and said : Galahad, Knight, ye be welcome, for much have I desired your coming, for in such pain and in such anguish I have been 25 long. But now I trust to God the term is come that my pain shall be allayed, that I shall pass out of this world so as it was promised me long ago. Therewith a voice said : There be two among you that be not in the quest of the Sangreal, and therefore depart ye.

CHAPTER XX

HOW GALAHAD AND HIS FELLOWS WERE FED OF THE HOLY SANGREAL, AND HOW OUR LORD APPEARED TO THEM, AND OTHER THINGS

THEN King Pelles and his son departed. And therewithal beseemed them that there came a man, and four angels from heaven, clothed in likeness of a bishop, and had a cross in his hand; and these four angels bare him up in a chair, and set him down before the table of silver whereupon 5 the Sangreal was; and it seemed that he had in midst of his forehead letters the which said: See ye here Joseph,° the first bishop of Christendom, the same which Our Lord succoured in the city of Sarras in the spiritual place. Then the knights marvelled, for that bishop was dead more than three 10 hundred year to-fore. O knights, said he, marvel not, for I was sometime an earthly man. With that they heard the chamber door open, and there they saw angels; and two bare candles of wax, and the third a towel, and the fourth a spear which bled marvellously, that three drops fell within a box 15 which he held with his other hand. And they set the candles upon the table, and the third the towel upon the vessel, and the fourth the holy spear even upright upon the vessel. And then the bishop made semblaunt as though he would have gone to the sacring of the mass. And then he took an 20 ubblie which was made in likeness of bread. And at the lifting up there came a figure in likeness of a child, and the visage was as red and as bright as any fire, and smote himself into the bread, so that they all saw it that the bread was formed of a fleshly man; and then he put it into the Holy 25 Vessel again, and then he did that longed to a priest to do

to a mass. And then he went to Galahad and kissed him, and bade him go and kiss his fellows: and so he did anon. Now, said he, servants of Jesu Christ, ye shall be fed afore this table with sweet meats that never knights tasted. And when
5 he had said, he vanished away. And they sat them at the table in a great dread, and made their prayers.

Then looked they and saw a man come out of the Holy Vessel, that had all the signs of the passion of Jesu Christ, bleeding all openly, and said: My knights, and my servants,
10 and my true children, which be come out of deadly life into spiritual life, I will now no longer hide me from you, but ye shall see now a part of my secrets and of my hidden things: now hold and receive the high meat which ye have so much desired. Then took he himself the Holy Vessel and came to
15 Galahad; and he kneeled down, and there he received his Saviour, and after him so received all his fellows; and they thought it so sweet that it was marvellous to tell. Then said he to Galahad: Son, wottest thou what I hold betwixt my hands? Nay, said he, but if ye will tell me. This is, said
20 he, the holy dish wherein I ate the lamb on Sheer-Thursday.

And now hast thou seen that thou most desired to see, but yet hast thou not seen it so openly as thou shalt see it in the city of Sarras in the spiritual place. Therefore thou must go hence and bear with thee this Holy Vessel; for this night it
25 shall depart from the realm of Logris, that it shall never be seen more here. And wottest thou wherefore? For he is not served nor worshipped to his right by them of this land, for they be turned to evil living; therefore I shall disherit them of the honour which I have done them. And therefore
30 go ye three to-morrow unto the sea, where ye shall find your ship ready, and with you take the sword with the strange girdles, and no more with you but Sir Percivale and Sir Bors. Also I will that ye take with you of the blood of this spear

for to anoint the Maimed King, both his legs and all his body, and he shall have his health. Sir, said Galahad, why shall not these other fellows go with us? For this cause: for right as I departed my apostles one here and another there, so I will that ye depart; and two of you shall die in ⁵ my service, but one of you shall come again and tell tidings. Then gave he them his blessing and vanished away.

CHAPTER XXI

HOW GALAHAD ANOINTED WITH THE BLOOD OF THE SPEAR THE MAIMED KING, AND OF OTHER ADVENTURES

AND Galahad went anon to the spear which lay upon the table, and touched the blood with his fingers, and came after to the Maimed King and anointed his legs. And ¹⁰ therewith he clothed him anon, and start upon his feet out of his bed as an whole man, ^o and thanked Our Lord that He had healed him. And that was not to the worldward, for anon he yielded him to a place of religion of white monks, and was a full holy man. That same night about midnight ¹⁵ came a voice among them which said: My sons and not my chief sons, my friends and not my warriors, go ye hence where ye hope best to do and as I bade you. Ah, thanked be Thou, Lord, that Thou wilt vouchsafe to call us, Thy sinners. Now may we well prove that we have not lost our pains. ²⁰ And anon in all haste they took their harness and departed. But the three knights of Gaul, one of them hight Claudine, King Cladas' son, and the other two were great gentlemen. Then prayed Galahad to everych of them, that if they come to King Arthur's court that they should salute my Lord, Sir ²⁵ Launcelot, my father, and all the fellowship¹ of the Round

¹ So W. de Worde; Caxton "of them."

Table; and prayed them if that they came on that part that they should not forget it.

Right so departed Galahad, Percivale and Bors with him; and so they rode three days, and then they came to 5 a rivage, and found the ship whereof the tale speaketh of to-fore. And when they came to the board they found in the midst the table of silver which they had left with the Maimed King, and the Sangreal which was covered with red samite. Then were they glad to have such things in 10 their fellowship; and so they entered and made great reverence thereto; and Galahad fell in his prayer long time to Our Lord, that at what time he asked, that he should pass out of this world. So much he prayed till a voice said to him: Galahad, thou shalt have thy request; and 15 when thou asketh the death of thy body thou shalt have it, and then shalt thou find the life of the soul. Percivale heard this, and prayed him, of fellowship that was between them, to tell him wherefore he asked such things. That shall I tell you, said Galahad; the other day when we saw 20 a part of the adventures of the Sangreal I was in such a joy of heart, that I trow never man was that was earthly. And therefore I wot well, when my body is dead my soul shall be in great joy to see the blessed Trinity every day, and the majesty of Our Lord, Jesu Christ.

25 So long were they in the ship that they said to Galahad: Sir, in this bed ought ye to lie, for so saith the scripture. And so he laid him down and slept a great while; and when he awaked he looked afore him and saw the city of Sarras. And as they would have landed they saw the ship wherein 30 Percivale had put his sister in. Truly, said Percivale, in the name of God, well hath my sister holden us covenant. Then took they out of the ship the table of silver, and he took it to Percivale and to Bors, to go to-fore, and Galahad came

behind. And right so they went to the city, and at the gate of the city they saw an old man crooked. Then Galahad called him and bade him help to bear this heavy thing. Truly, said the old man, it is ten year ago that I might not go but with crutches. Care thou not, said Galahad, and arise up ⁵ and shew thy good will. And so he assayed, and found himself as whole as ever he was. Than ran he to the table, and took one part against Galahad. And anon arose there great noise in the city, that a cripple was made whole by knights marvellous that entered into the city. ¹⁰

Then anon after, the three knights went to the water, and brought up into the palace Percivale's sister, and buried her as richly as a king's daughter ought to be. And when the king of the city, which was cleped Estorause, saw the fellowship, he asked them of whence they were, and what ¹⁵ thing it was that they had brought upon the table of silver. And they told him the truth of the Sangreal, and the power which that God had sent there. Then the king was a tyrant, and was come of the line of paynims, and took them and put them in prison in a deep hole. ²⁰

CHAPTER XXII

HOW THEY WERE FED WITH THE SANGREAL WHILE THEY WERE IN PRISON, AND HOW GALAHAD WAS MADE KING

BUT as soon as they were there Our Lord sent them the Sangreal, through whose grace they were always fulfilled while that they were in prison. So at the year's end it befell that this King Estorause lay sick, and felt that he should die. Then he sent for the three knights, and they came afore ²⁵ him; and he cried them mercy of that he had done to them,

and they forgave it him goodly; and he died anon. When the king was dead all the city was dismayed, and wist not who might be their king. Right so as they were in counsel there came a voice among them, and bade them choose the 5 youngest knight of them three to be their king: For he shall well maintain you and all yours. So they made Galahad king by all the assent of the holy city, and else they would have slain him. And when he was come to behold the land, he let make above the table of silver a chest of gold and of precious 10 stones, that hilled the Holy Vessel. And every day early the three fellows would come afore it, and make their prayers.

Now at the year's end, and the self day after Galahad had borne the crown of gold, he arose up early and his fellows, and came to the palace, and saw to-fore them the Holy Vessel, 15 and a man kneeling on his knees in likeness of a bishop, that had about him a great fellowship of angels, as it had been Jesu Christ himself; and then he arose and began a mass of Our Lady. And when he came to the sacrament of the mass, and had done, anon he called Galahad, and said to him: Come 20 forth the servant of Jesu Christ, and thou shalt see that thou hast much desired to see. And then he began to tremble right hard when the deadly flesh began to behold the spiritual things. Then he held up his hands toward heaven and said: Lord, I thank thee, for now I see that that hath been my 25 desire many a day. Now, blessed Lord, would I not longer live, if it might please thee, Lord. And therewith the good man took Our Lord's body betwixt his hands, and proffered it to Galahad, and he received it right gladly and meekly. Now wottest thou what I am? said the good man. Nay, 30 said Galahad. I am Joseph of Aramathe, the which Our Lord hath sent here to thee to bear thee fellowship; and wottest thou wherefore that he hath sent me more than any other? For thou hast resembled me in two things; in that

thou hast seen the marvels of the Sangreal, in that thou hast been a clean maiden, as I have been and am.

And when he had said these words Galahad went to Percivale and kissed him, and commended him to God; and so he went to Sir Bors and kissed him, and commended him to God, 5 and said: Fair lord, salute me to my lord, Sir Launcelot, my father, and as soon as ye see him, bid him remember of this unstable world. And therewith he kneeled down to-fore the table and made his prayers, and then suddenly his soul departed to Jesu Christ, and a great multitude of angels bare 10 his soul up to heaven, that the two fellows might well behold it. Also the two fellows saw come from heaven an hand, but they saw not the body. And then it came right to the Vessel, and took it and the spear, and so bare it up to heaven. Sithen was there never man so hardy to say that he had seen the 15 Sangreal.

CHAPTER XXIII

OF THE SORROW THAT PERCIVALE AND BORS MADE WHEN
GALAHAD WAS DEAD: AND OF PERCIVALE HOW HE DIED,
AND OTHER MATTERS

WHEN Percivale and Bors saw Galahad dead they made as much sorrow as ever did two men. And if they had not been good men they might lightly have fallen in despair. And the people of the country and of the city were right heavy. 20 And then he was buried; and as soon as he was buried Sir Percivale yielded him to an hermitage out of the city, and took a religious clothing. And Bors was alway with him, and never changed he his secular clothing, for that he purposed him to go again into the realm of Logris. Thus a year and two months 25 lived Sir Percivale in the hermitage a full holy life, and then

passed out of this world; and Bors let bury him by his sister and by Galahad in the spiritualities.

When Bors saw that he was in so far countries as in the parts of Babylon he departed from Sarras, and armed him 5 and came to the sea, and entered into a ship; and so it befell him in good adventure he came into the realm of Logris; and he rode so fast till he came to Camelot where the king was. And then was there great joy made of him in the court, for they weened all he had been dead, forasmuch as he had been 10 so long out of the country. And when they had eaten, the king made great clerks to come afore him, that they should chronicle of the high adventures of the good knights. When Bors had told him of the adventures of the Sangreal, such as had befallen him and his three fellows, that was Launce- 15 lot, Percivale, Galahad, and himself, there Launcelot told the adventures of the Sangreal that he had seen. All this was made in great books, and put up in almeries at Salisbury. And anon Sir Bors said to Sir Launcelot: Galahad, your own son, saluted you by me, and after you King Arthur and all the 20 court, and so did Sir Percivale, for I buried them with mine own hands in the city of Sarras. Also, Sir Launcelot, Galahad prayed you to remember of this unsiker world as ye behight him when ye were together more than half a year. This is true, said Launcelot; now I trust to God his 25 prayer shall avail me.

Then Launcelot took Sir Bors in his arms, and said: Gentle cousin, ye are right welcome to me, and all that ever I may do for you and for yours ye shall find my poor body ready at all times, while the spirit is in it, and that I promise you faithfully, and never to fail. And wit ye well, gertle cousin, Sir Bors, that ye and I will never depart asunder whilst our lives may last. Sir, said he, I will as ye will.

Thus endeth the history of the Sangreal, that was briefly drawn out of French into English, the which is a story chronicled for one of the truest and the holiest that is in this world, the which is the xvii. book.

And here followeth the eighteenth book

BOOK XVIII

CHAPTER I

OF THE JOY KING ARTHUR AND THE QUEEN HAD OF THE
ACHIEVEMENT OF THE SANGREAL; AND HOW LAUNCELOT
FELL TO HIS OLD LOVE AGAIN

So after the quest of the Sangreal was fulfilled, and all
knights that were left alive were come again unto the Table
Round, as the book of the Sangreal maketh mention, then
was there great joy in the court; and in especial King Arthur
5 and Queen Guenever made great joy of the remnant that were
come home, and passing glad was the king and the queen of
Sir Launcelot and of Sir Bors, for they had been passing long
away in the quest of the Sangreal.

Then, as the book saith, Sir Launcelot began to resort
10 unto Queen Guenever again, and forgat the promise and
the perfection that he made in the quest.^o For, as the book
saith, had not Sir Launcelot been in his privy thoughts and
in his mind so set inwardly to the queen as he was in seeming
outward to God, there had no knight passed him in the quest
15 of the Sangreal; but ever his thoughts were privily on the
queen, that many in the court spake of it, and in especial Sir
Agravaine, Sir Gawaine's brother, for he was ever open-
moutherd.^o

CHAPTER VIII

HOW KING ARTHUR LET CRY A TOURNAMENT AT CAMELOT
AT THE FEAST OF ASSUMPTION

THUS it passed on till our Lady Day, Assumption. Within a fifteen days of that feast the king let cry a great jousts and a tournament that should be at that day at Camelot, that is Winchester^o; and the king let cry that he and the King of Scots would joust against all that would come against them. 5 And when this cry was made, thither came many knights. So there came thither the King of Northgalis, and King Anguish of Ireland, and the King with the Hundred Knights, and Galahad, the haut prince,^o and the King of Northumberland, and many other noble dukes and earls of divers 10 countries. So King Arthur made him ready to depart to these jousts, and would have had the queen with him, but at that time she would not, she said, for she was sick and might not ride at that time. That me repenteth, said the king, for this seven year ye saw not such a noble fellowship together ex-15 cept at Whitsuntide when Galahad departed from the court. Truly, said the queen to the king, ye must hold me excused, I may not be there, and that me repenteth. And many deemed the queen would not be there because of Sir Launcelot du Lake, for Sir Launcelot would not ride with the king, 20 for he said that he was not whole of the wound the which Sir Mador had given him^o; wherefore the king was heavy and passing wroth. And so he departed toward Winchester with his fellowship; and so by the way the king lodged in a town called Astolat,^o that is now in English called Guildford, and 25 there the king lay in the castle.

So when the king was departed the queen called Sir Launcelot to her, and said thus: Sir Launcelot, ye are greatly to

blame thus to hold you behind my lord; what, trow ye, what will your enemies and mine say and deem? nought else but, See how Sir Launcelot holdeth him ever behind the king, and so doth the queen, for that they would have their pleasure 5 together. And thus will they say, said the queen to Sir Launcelot, have ye no doubt thereof.

CHAPTER IX

HOW SIR LAUNCELOT RODE TO ASTOLAT, AND RECEIVED A SLEEVE TO WEAR UPON HIS HELM AT THE REQUEST OF A MAID

MADAM, said Sir Launcelot, I allow your wit, it is of late come since ye were wise. And therefore, madam, at this time I will be ruled by your counsel, and this night I will take 10 my rest, and to-morrow by time I will take my way toward Winchester. But wit you well, said Sir Launcelot to the queen, that at that jousts I will be against the king, and against all his fellowship. Ye may there do as ye list, said the queen, but by my counsel ye shall not be against your 15 king and your fellowship. For therein be full many hard knights of your blood, as ye wot well enough, it needeth not to rehearse them. Madam, said Sir Launcelot, I pray you that ye be not displeased with me, for I will take the adventure that God will send me.

20 And so upon the morn early Sir Launcelot heard mass and brake his fast, and so took his leave of the queen and departed. And then he rode so much until he came to Astolat, that is Guildford; and there it happed him in the eventide he came to an old baron's place that hight Sir Ber- 25 nard of Astolat. And as Sir Launcelot entered into his lodging, King Arthur espied him as he did walk in a garden be-

side the castle, how he took his lodging, and knew him full well. It is well, said King Arthur unto the knights that were with him in that garden beside the castle, I have now espied one knight that will play his play at the jousts to the which we be gone toward; I undertake he will do marvels. Who is 5 that, we pray you tell us? said many knights that were there at that time. Ye shall not wit for me, said the king, as at this time. And so the king smiled, and went to his lodging.

So when Sir Launcelot was in his lodging, and unarmed him in his chamber, the old baron and hermit came to him 10 making his reverence, and welcomed him in the best manner; but the old knight knew not Sir Launcelot. Fair sir, said Sir Launcelot to his host, I would pray you to lend me a shield that were not openly known, for mine is well known. Sir, said his host, ye shall have your desire, for meseemeth ye 15 be one of the likeliest knights of the world, and therefore I shall shew you friendship. Sir, wit you well I have two sons that were but late made knights, and the eldest hight Sir Tirre, and he was hurt that same day he was made knight, that he may not ride, and his shield ye shall have; for that is 20 not known I dare say but here, and in no place else. And my youngest son hight Lavaine, and if it please you, he shall ride with you unto that jousts; and he is of his age strong and wight, for much my heart giveth unto you that ye should be a noble knight, therefore I pray you, tell me your name, 25 said Sir Bernard. As for that, said Sir Launcelot, ye must hold me excused as at this time, and if God give me grace to speed well at the jousts I shall come again and tell you. But I pray you, said Sir Launcelot, in any wise let me have your son, Sir Lavaine, with me, and that I may have his 30 brother's shield. All this shall be done, said Sir Bernard.

This old baron had a daughter that was called that time the Fair Maiden of Astolat. And ever she beheld Sir Launce-

lot wonderfully; and as the book saith, she cast such a love unto Sir Launcelot that she could never withdraw her love, wherefore she died, and her name was Elaine le Blank.^o So thus as she came to and fro she was so hot in her love that 5 she besought Sir Launcelot to wear upon him at the jousts a token of hers.^o Fair damosel, said Sir Launcelot, an if I grant you that, ye may say I do more for your love than ever I did for lady or damosel. Then he remembered him he would go to the jousts disguised. And because he had never fore 10 that time borne no manner of token of no damosel, then he bethought him that he would bear one of her, that none of his blood thereby might know him, and then he said: Fair maiden, I will grant you to wear a token of yours upon mine helmet, and therefore what it is, shew it me. Sir, she said, 15 it is a red sleeve of mine, of scarlet, well embroidered with great pearls: and so she brought it him. So Sir Launcelot received it, and said: Never did I erst so much for no damosel. And then Sir Launcelot betook the fair maiden his shield in keeping, and prayed her to keep that until that he came again; 20 and so that night he had merry rest and great cheer, for ever the damosel Elaine was about Sir Launcelot all the while she might be suffered.

CHAPTER X

HOW THE TOURNAMENT BEGAN AT WINCHESTER, AND WHAT
KNIGHTS WERE AT THE JOUSTS; AND OTHER THINGS

So upon a day,^o on the morn, King Arthur and all his knights departed, for their king had tarried three days to 25 abide his noble knights. And so when the king was ridden, Sir Launcelot and Sir Lavaine made them ready to ride, and either of them had white shields, and the red sleeve Sir Launce-

lot let carry with him. And so they took their leave at Sir Bernard, the old baron, and at his daughter, the Fair Maiden of Astolat. And then they rode so long till that they came to Camelot, that time called Winchester; and there was great press of kings, dukes, earls, and barons, and many noble 5 knights. But there Sir Launcelot was lodged privily by the means of Sir Lavaine with a rich burgess, that no man in that town was ware what they were. And so they reposed them there till our Lady Day, Assumption, as the great feast should be. So then trumpets blew unto the field, and King 10 Arthur was set on high upon a scaffold to behold who did best. But as the French book saith, the king would not suffer Sir Gawaine to go from him, for never had Sir Gawaine the better an Sir Launcelot were in the field; and many times was Sir Gawaine rebuked when Launcelot came into any 15 jousts disguised.

Then some of the kings, as King Anguish of Ireland and the King of Scots, were that time turned upon the side of King Arthur. And then on the other party was the King of Northgalis, and the King with the Hundred Knights, 20 and the King of Northumberland, and Sir Galahad, the haut prince. But these three kings and this duke were passing weak to hold against King Arthur's party, for with him were the noblest knighthood of the world. So then they withdrew them either party from other, and every man made him ready 25 in his best manner to do what he might.

Then Sir Launcelot made him ready, and put the red sleeve upon his head, and fastened it fast; and so Sir Launcelot and Sir Lavaine departed out of Winchester privily, and rode until a little leaved wood behind the party that held 30 against King Arthur's party, and there they held them still till the parties smote together. And then came in the King of Scots and the King of Ireland on Arthur's party, and against

them came the King of Northumberland, and the King with the Hundred Knights smote down the King of Northumberland, and the King with the Hundred Knights smote down King Anguish of Ireland. Then Sir Palomides that was on 5 Arthur's party encountered with Sir Galahad, and either of them smote down other, and either party halp their lords on horseback again. So there began a strong assail upon both parties. And then came in Sir Brandiles, Sir Sagramore le Desirous, Sir Dodinas le Savage, Sir Kay le Seneschal, Sir 10 Griflet le Fise de Dieu, Sir Mordred, Sir Meliot de Logris, Sir Ozanna le Cure Hardy,° Sir Safere, Sir Epinogris, Sir Galleron of Galway. All these fifteen knights° were knights of the Table Round. So these with more other came in together, and beat aback the King of Northumberland and the King of 15 Northgalis. When Sir Launcelot saw this, as he hoved in a little leaved wood, then he said unto Sir Lavaine: See yonder is a company of good knights, and they hold them together as boars that were chafed with dogs. That is truth, said Sir Lavaine.

CHAPTER XI

HOW SIR LAUNCELOT AND SIR LAVAINE ENTERED IN THE FIELD AGAINST THEM OF KING AF HUR'S COURT, AND HOW LAUNCELOT WAS HURT

20 Now, said Sir Launcelot, an ye will help me a little, ye shall see yonder fellowship that chaseth now these men in our side, that they shall go as fast backward as they went forward. Sir, spare not, said Sir Lavaine, for I shall do what I may. Then Sir Launcelot and Sir Lavaine came in 25 at the thickest of the press, and there Sir Launcelot smote down Sir Brandiles, Sir Sagramore, Sir Dodinas, Sir Kay,

Sir Griflet, and all this he did with one spear; and Sir Lavaine smote down Sir Lucan le Butler and Sir Bedevere. And then Sir Launcelot gat another spear, and there he smote down Sir Agravaine, Sir Gaheris, and Sir Mordred, and Sir Meliot de Logris; and Sir Lavaine smote Ozanna le Cure Hardy. 5 And then Sir Launcelot drew his sword, and there he smote on the right hand and on the left hand, and by great force he unhorsed Sir Safere, Sir Epinogris, and Sir Galleron; and then the knights of the Table Round withdrew them aback, after they had gotten their horses as well as they might. 10 O mercy Jesu, said Sir Gawaine, what knight is yonder that doth so marvellous deeds of arms in that field? I wot well what he is, said King Arthur, but as at this time I will not name him. Sir, said Sir Gawaine, I would say it were Sir Launcelot by his riding and his buffets that I see him deal, 15 but ever meseemeth it should not be he, for that he beareth the red sleeve upon his head; for I wist him never bear token at no jousts, of lady nor gentlewoman. Let him be, said King Arthur, he will be better known, and do more, or ever he depart. 20

Then the party that was against King Arthur were well comforted, and then they held them together that beforehand were sore rebuked. Then Sir Bors, Sir Ector de Maris, and Sir Lionel called unto them the knights of their blood, as Sir Blamore de Ganis, Sir Bleoberis, Sir Aliduke, Sir Galihud, Sir 25 Galihodin, Sir Bellangere le Beuse. So these nine knights of Sir Launcelot's kin thrust in mightily, for they were all noble knights; and they, of great hate and despite that they had unto him, thought to rebuke that noble knight Sir Launcelot, and Sir Lavaine, for they knew them not; and so they 30 came hurling together, and smote down many knights of Northgalis and of Northumberland. And when Sir Launcelot saw them fare so, he gat a spear in his hand; and there

encountered with him all at once Sir Bors, Sir Ector, and Sir Lionel, and all they three smote him at once with their spears. And with force of themself they smote Sir Launcelot's horse to the earth; and by misfortune Sir Bors smote Sir 5 Launcelot through the shield into the side, and the spear brake, and the head left still in his side.

When Sir Lavaine saw his master lie on the ground, he ran to the King of Scots and smote him to the earth; and by great force he took his horse, and brought him to Sir Launcelot, and maugre of them all he made him to mount upon that horse. And then Launcelot gat a spear in his hand, and there he smote Sir Bors, horse and man, to the earth. In the same wise he served Sir Ector and Sir Lionel; and Sir Lavaine smote down Sir Blamore de Ganis. And then Sir Launcelot 15 drew his sword, for he felt himself so sore y-hurt that he weened there to have had his death. And then he smote Sir Bleoberis such a buffet on the helm that he fell down to the earth in a swoon. And in the same wise he served Sir Aliduke and Sir Galihud. And Sir Lavaine smote down Sir 20 Bellangere, that was the son of Alisander le Orphelin.⁹

And by this was Sir Bors horsed, and then he came with Sir Ector and Sir Lionel, and all they three smote with swords upon Sir Launcelot's helmet. And when he felt their buffets and his wound, the which was so grievous, then he thought 25 to do what he might while he might endure. And then he gave Sir Bors such a buffet that he made him bow his head passing low; and therewithal he raced off his helm, and might have slain him; and so pulled him down, and in the same wise he served Sir Ector and Sir Lionel. For as the book 30 saith he might have slain them, but when he saw their visages his heart might not serve him thereto, but left them there. And then afterward he hurled into the thickest press of them all, and did there the marvelloust deeds of arms that ever man

saw or heard speak of, and ever Sir Lavaine, the good knight, with him. And there Sir Launcelot with his sword smote down and pulled down, as the French book maketh mention, mo than thirty knights, and the most part were of the Table Round; and Sir Lavaine did full well that day, for he smote 5 down ten knights of the Table Round.

CHAPTER XII

HOW SIR LAUNCELOT AND SIR LAVAINE DEPARTED OUT OF THE FIELD, AND IN WHAT JEOPARDY LAUNCELOT WAS

MERCY Jesu, said Sir Gawaine to Arthur, I marvel what knight that he is with the red sleeve. Sir, said King Arthur, he will be known or he depart. And then the king blew unto lodging, and the prize was given by heralds unto the knight 10 with the white shield that bare the red sleeve. Then came the King with the Hundred Knights, the King of Northgalis, and the King of Northumberland, and Sir Galahad, the haut prince, and said unto Sir Launcelot: Fair knight, God thee bless, for much have ye done this day for us, therefore we pray 15 you that ye wil come with us that ye may receive the honour and the prize as ye have worshipfully deserved it. My fair lords, said Sir Launcelot, wit you well if I have deserved thanks I have sore bought it, and that me repenteth, for I am like never to escape with my life; therefore, fair lords, 20 I pray you that ye will suffer me to depart where me liketh, for I am sore hurt. I take none force of none honour, for I had liefer to repose me than to be lord of all the world. And therewithal he groaned piteously, and rode a great wallop away-ward from them until he came under a wood's side. 25

And when he saw that he was from the field nigh a mile,

that he was sure he might not be seen, then he said with an high voice: O gentle knight, Sir Lavaine, help me that this truncheon were out of my side, for it sticketh so sore that it nigh slayeth me. O mine own lord, said Sir Lavaine, I 5 would fain do that might please you, but I dread me sore an I pull out the truncheon that ye shall be in peril of death. I charge you, said Sir Launcelot, as ye love me, draw it out. And therewithal he descended from his horse, and right so did Sir Lavaine; and forthwithal Sir Lavaine drew the trun- 10 cheon out of his side, and he gave a great shriek and a mar-vellous grisly groan, and the blood brast out nigh a pint at once, that at the last he sank down upon his buttocks, and so swooned pale and deadly. Alas, said Sir Lavaine, what shall I do? And then he turned Sir Launcelot into the wind, 15 but so he lay there nigh half an hour as he had been dead.

And so at the last Sir Launcelot cast up his eyes, and said: O Lavaine, help me that I were on my horse, for here is fast by within this two mile a gentle hermit that sometime was a full noble knight and a great lord of possessions. And for 20 great goodness he hath taken him to wilful poverty, and forsaken many lands, and his name is Sir Baudwin of Brit-tany,^o and he is a full noble surgeon and a good leech. Now let see, help me up that I were there, for ever my heart giv-eth me that I shall never die of my cousin-germain's hands. 25 And then with great pain Sir Lavaine halp him upon his horse.

And then they rode a great wallop together, and ever Sir Launcelot bled that it ran down to the earth; and so by fortune they came to that hermitage the which was under a wood, and a great cliff on the other side, and a fair water 30 running under it. And then Sir Lavaine beat on the gate with the butt of his spear, and cried fast: Let in for Jesu's sake.

And there came a fair child to them, and asked them what they would. Fair son, said Sir Lavaine, go and pray thy lord,

the hermit, for God's sake to let in here a knight that is full sore wounded; and this day tell thy lord I saw him do more deeds of arms than ever I heard say that any man did. So the child went in lightly, and then he brought the hermit, the which was a passing good man. When Sir Lavaine saw him he prayed him for God's sake of succour. What knight is he? said the hermit. Is he of the house of King Arthur, or not? I wot not, said Sir Lavaine, what is he, nor what is his name, but well I wot I saw him do marvellously this day as of deeds of arms. On whose party was he? said the hermit. Sir, said Sir Lavaine, he was this day against King Arthur, and there he won the prize of all the knights of the Round Table. I have seen the day, said the hermit, I would have loved him the worse because he was against my lord, King Arthur, for sometime I was one of the fellowship of the Round Table, but I thank God now I am otherwise disposed. But where is he? let me see him. Then Sir Lavaine brought the hermit to him.

CHAPTER XIII

HOW LAUNCELOT WAS BROUGHT TO AN HERMIT FOR TO BE HEALED OF HIS WOUND, AND OF OTHER MATTERS

AND when the hermit beheld him, as he sat leaning upon his saddle-bow ever bleeding piteously, and ever the knight-hermit thought that he should know him, but he could not bring him to knowledge because he was so pale for bleeding. What knight are ye, said the hermit, and where were ye born? My fair lord, said Sir Launcelot, I am a stranger and a knight adventurous, that laboureth throughout many realms for to win worship. Then the hermit advised him better, and saw by a wound on his cheek that he was Sir Launcelot.^o

Alas, said the hermit, mine own lord why lain you your name from me? Forsooth I ought to know you of right, for ye are the most noblest knight of the world, for well I know you for Sir Launcelot. Sir, said he, sith ye know me, help 5 me an ye may, for God's sake, for I would be out of this pain at once, either to death or to life. Have ye no doubt, said the hermit, ye shall live and fare right well. And so the hermit called to him two of his servants, and so he and his servants bare him into the hermitage, and lightly unarmed him, 10 and laid him in his bed. And then anon the hermit staunched his blood, and made him to drink good wine, so that Sir Launcelot was well refreshed and knew himself; for in those days it was not the guise of hermits as is nowadays, for there 15 were none hermits in those days but that they had been men of worship and of prowess; and those hermits held great household, and refreshed people that were in distress.

Now turn we unto King Arthur, and leave we Sir Launcelot in the hermitage. So when the kings were come together on both parties, and the great feast should be holden, King 20 Arthur asked the King of Northgalis and their fellowship, where was that knight that bare the red sleeve: Bring him afore me that he may have his laud, and honour, and the prize, as it is right. Then spake Sir Galahad, the haut prince, and the King with the Hundred Knights: We suppose that knight 25 is mischieved, and that he is never like to see you nor none of us all, and that is the greatest pity that ever we wist of any knight. Alas, said Arthur, how may this be, is he so hurt? What is his name? said King Arthur. Truly, said they all, we know not his name, nor from whence he came, 30 nor whither he would. Alas, said the king, this be to me the worst tidings that came to me this seven year, for I would not for all the lands I wield to know and wit it were so that that noble knight were slain. Know ye him? said they all.

As for that, said Arthur, whether I know him or know him not, ye shall not know for me what man he is, but Almighty Jesu send me good tidings of him. And so said they all. By my head, said Sir Gawaine, if it so be that the good knight be so sore hurt, it is great damage and pity to all this land, 5 for he is one of the noblest knights that ever I saw in a field handle a spear or a sword; and if he may be found I shall find him, for I am sure he nis not far from this town. Bear you well, said King Arthur, an ye may find him, unless that he be in such a plight that he may not wield himself. Jesu 10 defend, said Sir Gawaine, but wit I shall what he is, an I may find him.

Right so Sir Gawaine took a squire with him upon hackneys, and rode all about Camelot within six or seven mile, but so he came again and could hear no word of him. Then within 15 two days King Arthur and all the fellowship returned unto London again. And so as they rode by the way it happed Sir Gawaine at Astolat to lodge with Sir Bernard thereas was Sir Launcelot lodged. And so as Sir Gawaine was in his chamber to repose him Sir Bernard, the old baron, came unto him, 20 and his daughter Elaine, to cheer him and to ask him what tidings, and who did best at that tournament of Winchester. So God me help, said Sir Gawaine, there were two knights that bare two white shields, but the one of them bare a red sleeve upon his head, and certainly he was one of the best 25 knights that ever I saw joust in field. For I dare say, said Sir Gawaine, that one knight with the red sleeve smote down forty knights of the Table Round, and his fellow did right well and worshipfully. Now blessed be God, said the Fair Maiden of Astolat, that that knight sped so well, for he is the man in 30 the world that I first loved, and truly he shall be last that ever I shall love. Now, fair maid, said Sir Gawaine, is that good knight your love? Certainly sir, said she, wit ye well he is

my love. Then know ye his name? said Sir Gawaine. Nay truly, said the damosel, I know not his name nor from whence he cometh, but to say that I love him, I promise you and God that I love him. How had ye knowledge of him first? 5 said Sir Gawaine.

CHAPTER XIV

HOW SIR GAWAINE WAS LODGED WITH THE LORD OF ASTOLAT,
AND THERE HAD KNOWLEDGE THAT IT WAS SIR LAUNCELOT
THAT BARE THE RED SLEEVE

THEN she told him as ye have heard to-fore, and how her father betook him her brother to do him service, and how her father lent him her brother's, Sir Tirre's, shield: And here with me he left his own shield. For what cause did 10 he so? said Sir Gawaine. For this cause, said the damosel, for his shield was too well known among many noble knights. Ah fair damosel, said Sir Gawaine, please it you let me have a sight of that shield. Sir, said she, it is in my chamber, covered with a case, and if ye will come with me ye shall see 15 it. Not so, said Sir Bernard till his daughter, let send for it.

So when the shield was come, Sir Gawaine took off the case, and when he beheld that shield he knew anon that it was Sir Launcelot's shield, and his own arms. Ah Jesu mercy, said Sir Gawaine, now is my heart more heavier than ever it was 20 to-fore. Why? said Elaine. For I have great cause, said Sir Gawaine. Is that knight that oweth this shield your love? Yea truly, said she, my love he is, God would I were his love. So God me speed, said Sir Gawaine, fair damosel ye have right, for an he be your love ye love the most honourable knight of the world, and the man of most worship. So 25 me thought ever, said the damosel, for never or that time,

for no knight that ever I saw, loved I never none erst. God grant, said Sir Gawaine, that either of you may rejoice other, but that is in a great adventure. But truly, said Sir Gawaine unto the damosel, ye may say ye have a fair grace, for why I have known that noble knight this four-and-twenty year, 5 and never or that day, I nor none other knight, I dare make good, saw nor heard say that ever he bare token or sign of no lady, gentlewoman, ne maiden, at no jousts nor tournament. And therefore fair maiden, said Sir Gawaine, ye are much beholden to him to give him thanks. But I dread me, said Sir 10 Gawaine, that ye shall never see him in this world, and that is great pity that ever was of earthly knight. Alas, said she, how may this be, is he slain? I say not so, said Sir Gawaine, but wit ye well he is grievously wounded, by all manner of signs, and by men's sight more likelier to be dead than to be 15 alive; and wit ye well he is the noble knight, Sir Launcelot, for by this shield I know him. Alas, said the Fair Maiden of Astolat, how may this be, and what was his hurt? Truly, said Sir Gawaine, the man in the world that loved him best^o hurt him so; and I dare say, said Sir Gawaine, an that knight 20 that hurt him knew the very certainty that he had hurt Sir Launcelot, it would be the most sorrow that ever came to his heart.

Now fair father, said then Elaine, I require you give me leave to ride and to seek him, or else I wot well I shall go out 25 of my mind, for I shall never stint till that I find him and my brother, Sir Lavaine. Do as it liketh you, said her father, for me sore repenteth of the hurt of that noble knight. Right so the maid made her ready, and before Sir Gawaine, making great dole.

Then on the morn Sir Gawaine came to King Arthur, and told him how he had found Sir Launcelot's shield in the keeping of the Fair Maiden of Astolat. All that knew I aforhand,

said King Arthur, and that caused me I would not suffer you to have ado at the great jousts, for I espied, said King Arthur, when he came in till his lodging full late in the evening in Astolat. But marvel have I, said Arthur, that ever he would 5 bear any sign of any damosel, for or now I never heard say nor knew that ever he bare any token of none earthly woman. By my head, said Sir Gawaine, the Fair Maiden of Astolat loveth him marvellously well; what it meaneth I cannot say, and she is ridden after to seek him. So the king and all came 10 to London, and there Sir Gawaine openly disclosed to all the court that it was Sir Launcelot that jested best.

CHAPTER XV

OF THE SORROW THAT SIR BORS HAD FOR THE HURT OF LAUNCELOT; AND OF THE ANGER THAT THE QUEEN HAD BECAUSE LAUNCELOT BARE THE SLEEVE

AND when Sir Bors heard that, wit ye well he was an heavy man, and so were all his kinsmen. But when Queen Guenever wist that Sir Launcelot bare the red sleeve of the Fair 15 Maiden of Astolat she was nigh out of her mind for wrath. And then she sent for Sir Bors de Ganis in all the haste that might be. So when Sir Bors was come to-fore the queen, then she said: Ah Sir Bors, have ye heard say how falsely Sir Launcelot hath betrayed me? Alas madam, said Sir Bors, 20 I am afeard he hath betrayed himself and us all. No force, said the queen, though he be destroyed, for he is a false traitor-knight. Madam, said Sir Bors, I pray you say ye not so, for wit you well I may not hear such language of him. Why Sir Bors, said she, should I not call him traitor when he 25 bare the red sleeve upon his head at Winchester, at the great

jousts? Madam, said Sir Bors, that sleeve-bearing repenteth me sore, but I dare say he did it to none evil intent, but for this cause he bare the red sleeve that none of his blood should know him. For or then we, nor none of us all, never knew that ever he bare token or sign of maid, lady, ne gentlewoman. 5 Fie on him, said the quoen, yet for all his pride and bobaunce there ye proved yourself his better. Nay madam, say ye never more so, for he beat me and my fellows, and might have slain us an he had would. Fie on him, said the queen, for I heard Sir Gawaine say before my Lord Arthur that it were 10 marvel to tell the great love that is between the Fair Maiden of Astolat and him. Madam, said Sir Bors, I may not warn Sir Gawaine to say what it pleased him; but I dare say, as for my lord, Sir Launcelot, that he loveth no lady, gentlewoman, nor maid, but all he loveth in like much. And there- 15 fore madam, said Sir Bors, ye may say what ye will, but wit ye well I will haste me to seek him, and find him wheresom- ever he be, and God send me good tidings of him. And so leave we them there, and speak we of Sir Launcelot that lay in great peril. 20

So as fair Elaine came to Winchester she sought there all about, and by fortune Sir Lavaine was ridden to play him, to enchafe his horse. And anon as Elaine saw him she knew him, and then she cried aloud until him. And when he heard her anon he came to her, and then she asked 25 her brother how did my lord, Sir Launcelot. Who told you, sister, that my lord's name was Sir Launcelot? Then she told him how Sir Gawaine by his shield knew him. So they rode together till that they came to the hermitage, and anon she alighted. 30

So Sir Lavaine brought her in to Sir Launcelot; and when she saw him lie so sick and pale in his bed she might not speak, but suddenly she fell to the earth down suddenly

in a swoon, and there she lay a great while. And when she was relieved, she shrieked and said: My lord, Sir Launcelot, alas why be ye in this plight? and then she swooned again. And then Sir Launcelot prayed Sir Lavaine to take 5 her up: And bring her to me. And when she came to herself Sir Launcelot kissed her, and said: Fair maiden, why fare ye thus? ye put me to pain; wherefore make ye no more such cheer, for an ye be come to comfort me ye be right welcome; and of this little hurt that I have I shall be right hastily whole 10 by the grace of God. But I marvel, said Sir Launcelot, who told you my name? Then the fair maiden told him all how Sir Gawaine was lodged with her father: And there by your shield he discovered your name. Alas, said Sir Launcelot, that me repenteth that my name is known, for I am sure 15 it will turn unto anger. And then Sir Launcelot compassed in his mind that Sir Gawaine would tell Queen Guenever how he bare the red sleeve, and for whom; that he wist well would turn into great anger.

So this maiden Elaine never went from Sir Launcelot, 20 but watched him day and night, and did such attendance to him, that the French book saith there was never woman did more kindlier for man than she.^o Then Sir Launcelot prayed Sir Lavaine to make aspies in Winchester for Sir Bors if he came there, and told him by what tokenes he should 25 know him, by a wound in his forehead. For well I am sure, said Sir Launcelot, that Sir Bors will seek me, for he is the same good knight that hurt me.

CHAPTER XVI

HOW SIR BORS SOUGHT LAUNCELOT AND FOUND HIM IN THE HERMITAGE, AND OF THE LAMENTATION BETWEEN THEM

Now turn we unto Sir Bors de Ganis that came unto Winchester to seek after his cousin Sir Launcelot. And so when he came to Winchester, anon there were men that Sir Lavaine had made to lie in a watch for such a man, and anon Sir Lavaine had warning; and then Sir Lavaine came to Winchester and found Sir Bors, and there he told him what he was, and with whom he was, and what was his name. Now fair knight, said Sir Bors, I require you that ye will bring me to my lord, Sir Launcelot. Sir, said Sir Lavaine, take your horse, and within this hour ye shall see him. And so they departed, and came to the hermitage.

And when Sir Bors saw Sir Launcelot lie in his bed pale and discoloured, anon Sir Bors lost his countenance, and for kindness and pity he might not speak, but wept tenderly a great while. And then when he might speak he said thus: O my lord, Sir Launcelot, God you bless, and send you hasty recover; and full heavy am I of my misfortune and of mine unhappiness, for now I may call myself unhappy. And I dread me that God is greatly displeased with me, that he would suffer me to have such a shame for to hurt you that are all our leader, and all our worship; and therefore I call myself unhappy. Alas that ever such a caitiff-knight as I am should have power by unhappiness to hurt the most noblest knight of the world. Where I so shamefully set upon you and overcharged you, and where ye might have slain me, ye saved me; and so did not I, for I and your blood did to you our utterance. I marvel, said Sir Bors, that my heart

or my blood would serve me, wherefore my lord, Sir Launcelot, I ask your mercy. Fair cousin, said Sir Launcelot, ye be right welcome; and wit ye well, overmuch ye say for to please me, the which pleaseth me not, for why I have the same I 5 sought; for I would with pride have overcome you all, and there in my pride I was near slain, and that was in mine own default, for I might have given you warning of my being there. And then had I had no hurt, for it is an old said saw, there is hard battle thereas kin and friends do battle either 10 against other, there may be no mercy but mortal war. Therefore, fair cousin, said Sir Launcelot, let this speech overpass, and all shall be welcome that God sendeth; and let us leave off this matter and let us speak of some rejoicing, for this that is done may not be undone; and let us find a remedy how 15 soon that I may be whole.

Then Sir Bors leaned upon his bedside, and told Sir Launcelot how the queen was passing wroth with him, because he wore the red sleeve at the great jousts; and there Sir Bors told him all how Sir Gawaine discovered it: By your shield 20 that ye left with the Fair Maiden of Astolat. Then is the queen wroth, said Sir Launcelot, and therefore am I right heavy, for I deserved no wrath, for all that I did was because I would not be known. Right so excused I you, said Sir Bors, but all was in vain, for she said more largelier to me 25 than I to you now. But is this she, said Sir Bors, that is so busy about you, that men call the Fair Maiden of Astolat? She it is, said Sir Launcelot, that by no means I cannot put her from me. Why should ye put her from you? said Sir Bors, she is a passing fair damosel, and a well beseen, and 30 well taught; and God would, fair cousin, said Sir Bors, that ye could love her, but as to that I may not, nor I dare not, counsel you. But I see well, said Sir Bors, by her diligence about you that she loveth you entirely. That me repenteth,

said Sir Launcelot. Sir, said Sir Bors, she is not the first that hath lost her pain upon you, and that is the more pity: and so they talked of many more things. And so within three days or four Sir Launcelot was big and strong again.

CHAPTER XVII

HOW SIR LAUNCELOT ARMED HIM TO ASSAY IF HE MIGHT BEAR ARMS, AND HOW HIS WOUNDS BRAST OUT AGAIN

THEN Sir Bors told Sir Launcelot how there was sworn a great tournament and jousts betwixt King Arthur and the King of Northgalis, that should be upon All Hallowmass Day, [°] beside Winchester. Is that truth? said Sir Launcelot; then shall ye abide with me still a little while until that I be whole, for I feel myself right big and strong. Blessed be God, said Sir Bors. Then were they there nigh a month together, and ever this maiden Elaine did ever her diligent labour night and day unto Sir Launcelot, that there was never child nor wife more meeker to her father and husband than was that Fair Maiden of Astolat; wherefore Sir Bors was greatly pleased with her.

So upon a day, by the assent of Sir Launcelot, Sir Bors, and Sir Lavaine, they made the hermit to seek in woods for divers herbs, and so Sir Launcelot made fair Elaine to gather herbs for him to make him a bain. In the meanwhile Sir Launcelot made him to arm him at all pieces; and there he thought to assay his armour and his spear, for his hurt or not. And so when he was upon his horse he stirred him fiercely, and the horse was passing lusty and fresh because he was not laboured a month afore. And then Sir Launcelot couched that spear in the rest. That courser leapt mightily

when he felt the spurs ; and he that was upon him, the which was the noblest horse of the world, strained him mightily and stably, and kept still the spear in the rest ; and therewith Sir Launcelot strained himself so straitly, with so great force, 5 to get the horse forward, that the button of his wound brast both within and without ; and therewithal the blood came out so firecely that he felt himself so feeble that he might not sit upon his horse. And then Sir Launcelot cried unto Sir Bors : Ah, Sir Bors and Sir Lavaine, help, for I am come to 10 mine end. And therewith he fell down on the one side to the earth like a dead corpse. And then Sir Bors and Sir Lavaine came to him with sorrow-making out of measure. And so by fortune the maiden Elaine heard their mourning, and then she came thither ; and when she found Sir Launcelot 15 there armed in that place she cried and wept as she had been wood ; and then she kissed him, and did what she might to awake him. And then she rebuked her brother and Sir Bors, and called them false traitors, why they would take him out of his bed ; there she cried, and said she would 20 appeal them of his death.

With this came the holy hermit, Sir Baudwin of Brittany, and when he found Sir Launcelot in that plight he said but little, but wit ye well he was wroth ; and then he bade them : Let us have him in. And so they all bare him 25 unto the hermitage, and unarmed him, and laid him in his bed ; and evermore his wound bled piteously, but he stirred no limb of him. Then the knight-hermit put a thing in his nose and a little deal of water in his mouth. And then Sir Launcelot waked of his swoon, and then the hermit 30 staunched his bleeding. And when he might speak he asked Sir Launcelot why he put his life in jeopardy. Sir said Sir Launcelot, because I weened I had been strong, and also Sir Bors told me that there should be at All Hallow-

mass a great jousts betwixt King Arthur and the King of Northgalis, and therefore I thought to assay it myself, whether I might be there or not. Ah, Sir Launcelot, said the hermit, your heart and your courage will never be done until your last day, but ye shall do now by my counsel. Let Sir Bors 5 depart from you, and let him do at that tournament what he may: And by the grace of God, said the knight-hermit, by that the tournament be done and ye come hither again, Sir Launcelot shall be as whole as ye, so that he will be governed by me.

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CHAPTER XVIII

HOW SIR BORS RETURNED AND TOLD TIDINGS OF SIR LAUNCELOT; AND OF THE TOURNEY, AND TO WHOM THE PRIZE WAS GIVEN

THEN Sir Bors made him ready to depart from Sir Launcelot; and then Sir Launcelot said: Fair cousin, Sir Bors, recommend me unto all them unto whom me ought to recommend me unto. And I pray you, enforce yourself at that jousts that ye may be best, for my love; and here 15 shall I abide you at the mercy of God till ye come again. And so Sir Bors departed and came to the court of King Arthur, and told them in what place he had left Sir Launcelot. That me repenteth, said the king, but since he shall have his life we all may thank God. And there Sir Bors 20 told the queen in what jeopardy Sir Launcelot was when he would assay his horse. And all that he did, madam, was for the love of you, because he would have been at this tournament. Fie on him, recreant knight, said the queen, for wit ye well I am right sorry an he shall have his life. 25 His life shall he have, said Sir Bors, and who that would

otherwise, except you, madam, we that be of his blood should help to short their lives. But madam, said Sir Bors, ye have been oft-times displeased with my lord, Sir Launcelot, but at all times at the end ye find him a true knight : 5 and so he departed.

And then every knight of the Round Table that were there at that time present made them ready to be at that jousts at All Hallowmáss, and thither drew many knights of divers countries. And as All Hallowmass drew near, 10 thither came the King of Northgalis, and the King with the Hundred Knights, and Sir Galahad, the haut prince, of Surluse, and thither came King Anguish of Ireland, and the King of Scots. So these three kings came on King Arthur's party. And so that day Sir Gawaine did great deeds of 15 arms, and began first. And the heralds numbered that Sir Gawaine smote down twenty knights. Then Sir Bors de Ganis came in the same time, and he was numbered that he smote down twenty knights ; and therefore the prize was given betwixt them both, for they began first and 20 longest endured. Also Sir Gareth, as the book saith, did that day great deeds of arms, for he smote down and pulled down thirty knights. But when he had done these deeds he tarried not but so departed, and therefore he lost his prize. And Sir Palomides did great deeds of arms that 25 day, for he smote down twenty knights, but he departed suddenly, and men deemed Sir Gareth and he rode together to some manner adventures.

So when this tournament was done Sir Bors departed, and rode till he came to Sir Launcelot, his cousin ; and then 30 he found him walking on his feet, and there either made great joy of other ; and so Sir Bors told Sir Launcelot of all the jousts like as ye have heard. I marvel, said Sir Launcelot, that Sir Gareth, when he had done such deeds

of arms, that he would not tarry. Thereof we marvelled all, said Sir Bors, for but if it were you, or Sir Tristram, or Sir Lamorak de Galis,^o I saw never knight bear down so many in so little a while as did Sir Gareth: and anon he was gone we wist not where. By my head, said Sir Launce- 5 lot, he is a noble knight, and a mighty man and well breathed; and if he were well assayed, said Sir Launcelot, I would deem he were good enough for any knight that beareth the life; and he is a gentle knight, courteous, true, and bounteous, meek, and mild, and in him is no manner of mal engin, but 10 plain, faithful, and true.^o

So then they made them ready to depart from the hermit. And so upon a morn they took their horses and Elaine le Blank with them; and when they came to Astolat there were they well lodged, and had great cheer of Sir Bernard, 15 the old baron, and of Sir Tirre, his son. And so upon the morn when Sir Launcelot should depart, fair Elaine brought her father with her, and Sir Lavaine, and Sir Tirre, and thus she said :

CHAPTER XIX

OF THE GREAT LAMENTATION OF THE FAIR MAID OF ASTOLAT
WHEN LAUNCELOT SHOULD DEPART, AND HOW SHE DIED
FOR HIS LOVE

My lord, Sir Launcelot, now I see ye will depart; now fair 20 knight and courteous knight, have mercy upon me, and suffer me not to die for thy love. What would ye that I did? said Sir Launcelot. I would have you to my husband, said Elaine. Fair damosel, I thank you, said Sir Launcelot, but truly, said he, I cast me never to be wedded man. Then, 25 fair knight, said she, will ye be my paramour? Jesu defend

me, said Sir Launcelot, for then I rewarded your father and your brother full evil for their great goodness. Alas, said she, then must I die for your love. Ye shall not so, said Sir Launcelot, for wit ye well, fair maiden, I might have been
5 married an I had would, but I never applied me to be married yet; but because, fair damosel, that ye love me as ye say ye do, I will for your good will and kindness show you some goodness, and that is this, that wheresomever ye will beset your heart upon some good knight that will wed you, I shall
10 give you together a thousand pound yearly to you and to your heirs; thus much will I give you, fair madam, for your kindness, and always while I live to be your own knight. Of all this, said the maiden, I will none, for but if ye will wed me, or else be my paramour at the least, wit you well,
15 Sir Launcelot, my good days are done. Fair damosel, said Sir Launcelot, of these two things ye must pardon me.

Then she shrieked shrilly, and fell down in a swoon; and then women bare her into her chamber, and there she made over much sorrow; and then Sir Launcelot would depart,
20 and there he asked Sir Lavaine what he would do. What should I do, said Sir Lavaine, but follow you, but if ye drive me from you, or command me to go from you. Then came Sir Bernard to Sir Launcelot and said to him: I cannot see but that my daughter Elaine will die for your sake. I may
25 not do withal, said Sir Launcelot, for that me sore repenteth, for I report me to yourself, that my proffer is fair; and me repenteth, said Sir Launcelot, that she loveth me as she doth; I was never the causer of it, for I report me to your son I early ne late proffered her bounté nor fair behests; and as
30 for me, said Sir Launcelot, I dare do all that a knight should do that she is a clean maiden for me, both for deed and for will. And I am right heavy of her distress, for she is a full fair maiden, good and gentle, and well taught. Father, said

Sir Lavaine, I dare make good she is a clean maiden as for my lord Sir Launcelot ; but she doth as I do, for sithen I first saw my lord Sir Launcelot, I could never depart from him, nor nought I will an I may follow him.

Then Sir Launcelot took his leave, and so they departed, 5 and came unto Winchester. And when Arthur wist that Sir Launcelot was come whole and sound the king made great joy of him, and so did Sir Gawaine and all the knights of the Round Table except Sir Agravaine and Sir Mordred. Also Queen Guenever was wood wroth with Sir Launcelot, and 10 would by no means speak with him, but estranged herself from him ; and Sir Launcelot made all the means that he might for to speak with the queen, but it would not be.

Now speak we of the Fair Maiden of Astolat that made such sorrow day and night that she never slept, ate, nor drank, 15 and ever she made her complaint unto Sir Launcelot. So when she had thus endured a ten days, that she feebled so that she must needs pass out of this world, then she shrived her clean, and received her Creator. And ever she complained still upon Sir Launcelot. Then her ghostly father^o bade her 20 leave such thoughts. Then she said, why should I leave such thoughts ? Am I not an earthly woman ? And all the while the breath is in my body I may complain me, for my belief is I do none offence though I love an earthly man ; and I take God to my record I loved never none but Sir Launce- 25 lot du Lake, nor never shall, and a clean maiden I am for him and for all other ; and sithen it is the sufferance of God that I shall die for the love of so noble a knight, I beseech the High Father of Heaven to have mercy upon my soul, and upon mine innumerable pains that I suffered may be allegiance 30 of part of my sins. For sweet Lord Jesu, said the fair maiden, I take Thee to record, on Thee I was never great offender against thy laws ; but that I loved this noble knight,

Sir Launcelot, out of measure, and of myself, good Lord, I might not withstand the fervent love wherefore I have my death.

And then she called her father, Sir Bernard, and her brother, Sir Tirre, and heartily she prayed her father that her brother might write a letter like as she did indite it : and so her father granted her. And when the letter was written word by word like as she devised, then she prayed her father that she might be watched until she were dead.
5 And while my body is hot let this letter be put in my right hand, and my hand bound fast with the letter until that I be cold ; and let me be put in a fair bed with all the richest clothes that I have about me, and so let my bed and all my richest clothes be laid with me in a chariot unto the next place
10 where Thames is ; and there let me be put within a barget, and but one man with me, such as ye trust to steer me thither, and that my barget be covered with black samite over and over: thus father I beseech you let it be done. So her father granted it her faithfully, all things should be done like as she
15 had devised. Then her father and her brother made great dole, for when this was done anon she died. And so when she was dead the corpse and the bed all was led the next way unto Thaines, and there a man, and the corpse, and all, were put into Thames ; and so the man steered the barget unto
20 Westminster, and there he rowed a great while to and fro or any espied it.

CHAPTER XX

HOW THE CORPSE OF THE MAID OF ASTOLAT ARRIVED TO-FORE
KING ARTHUR, AND OF THE BURYING, AND HOW SIR
LAUNCELOT OFFERED THE MASS-PENNY

So by fortune King Arthur and the Queen Guenever were speaking together at a window, and so as they looked into Thames they espied this black barget, and had marvel what it meant. Then the king called Sir Kay, and showed it him. Sir, said Sir Kay, wit you well there is some new 5 tidings. Go thither, said the king to Sir Kay, and take with you Sir Brandiles and Agravaine, and bring me ready word what is there. Then these four knights departed and came to the barget and went in ; and there they found the fairest corpse lying in a rich bed, and a poor man sitting in 10 the barget's end, and no word would he speak. So these four knights returned unto the king again, and told him what they found. That fair corpse will I see, said the king. And so then the king took the queen by the hand, and went thither.

Then the king made the barget to be holden fast, and then 15 the king and the queen entered with certain knights with them ; and there he saw the fairest woman lie in a rich bed, covered unto her middle with many rich clothes, and all was of cloth of gold, and she lay as though she had smiled. Then the queen espied a letter in her right hand, and told it to the 20 king. Then the king took it and said : Now am I sure this letter will tell what she was, and why she is come hither. So then the king and the queen went out of the barget, and so commanded a certain man to wait upon the barget.

And so when the king was come within his chamber, 25 he called many knights about him, and said that he would wit openly what was written within that letter. Then the

king brake it, and made a clerk to read it, and this was the intent of the letter. Most noble knight, Sir Launcelot, now hath death made us two at debate for your love. I was your lover, that men called the Fair Maiden of Astolat; 5 therefore unto all ladies I make my moan, yet pray for my soul and bury me at least, and offer ye my mass-penny: this is my last request. And a clean maiden I died, I take God to witness: pray for my soul, Sir Launcelot, as thou art peerless. This was all the substance in the letter. And 10 when it was read, the king, the queen, and all the knights wept for pity of the doleful complaints. Then was Sir Launcelot sent for; and when he was come King Arthur made the letter to be read to him.

And when Sir Launcelot heard it word by word, he said: 15 My lord Arthur, wit ye well I am right heavy of the death of this fair damosel: God knoweth I was never causer of her death by my willing, and that will I report me to her own brother: here he is, Sir Lavaine. I will not say nay, said Sir Launcelot, but that she was both fair and good, and much 20 I was behoden unto her, but she loved me out of measure. Ye might have shewed her, said the queen, some bounty and gentleness that might have preserved her life. Madam, said Sir Launcelot, she would none other ways be answered but that she would be my wife, outhier else my paramour; 25 and of these two I would not grant her, but I proffered her for her good love that she shewed me, a thousand pound yearly to her, and to her heirs, and to wed any manner knight that she could find best to love in her heart. For madam, said Sir Launcelot, I love not to be constrained to love; for 30 love must arise of the heart, and not by no constraint. That is truth, said the king, and many knight's love is free in himself, and never will be bounden, for where he is bounden he looseth himself.

Then said the king unto Sir Launcelot : It will be your worship that ye oversee that she be interred worshipfully. Sir, said Sir Launcelot, that shall be done as I can best devise. And so many knights yede thither to behold that fair maiden. And so upon the morn she was interred richly, and Sir 5 Launcelot offered her mass-penny ; and all the knights of the Table Round that were there at that time offered with Sir Launcelot. And then the poor man went again with the barget. Then the queen sent for Sir Launcelot, and prayed him of mercy, for why that she had been wroth with him 10 causeless. This is not the first time, said Sir Launcelot, that ye had been displeased with me causeless, but, madam, ever I must suffer you, but what sorrow I endure I take no force. So this passed on all that winter, with all manner of hunting and hawking, and jousts and tourneys were many 15 betwixt many great lords, and ever in all places Sir Lavaine gat great worship, so that he was nobly renowned among many knights of the Table Round.

CHAPTER XXV

HOW TRUE LOVE IS LIKENED TO SUMMER

AND thus it passed on from Candlemass until after Easter, that the month of May was come, when every lusty heart 20 beginneth to blossom, and to bring forth fruit ; for like as herbs and trees bring forth fruit and flourish in May, in like wise every lusty heart that is in any manner a lover, springeth and flourisheth in lusty deeds. For it giveth unto all lovers courage, that lusty month of May, in some- 25 thing to constrain him to some manner of thing more in that month than in any other month, for divers causes. For then all herbs and trees renew a man and woman, and likewise lovers

call again to their mind old gentleness and old service, and many kind deeds that were forgotten by negligence. For like as winter rasure doth alway arase and deface green summer, so fareth it by unstable love in man and woman. For in 5 many persons there is no stability; for we may see all day, for a little blast of winter's rasure, anon we shall deface and lay apart true love for little or nought, that cost much thing; this is no wisdom nor stability, but it is feebleness of nature and great disworship, whosomewer useth this. Therefore, like as 10 May month flowereth and flourisheth in many gardens, so in like wise let every man of worship flourish his heart in this world, first unto God, and next unto the joy of them that he promised his faith unto; for there was never worshipful man or worshipful woman, but they loved one better than another; 15 and worship in arms may never be foiled, but first reserve the honour to God, and secondly the quarrel must come of thy lady: and such love I call virtuous love.

But nowadays men can not love seven night but they must have all their desires: that love may not endure by 20 reason; for where they be soon accorded and hasty heat, soon it cooleth. Right so fareth love nowadays, soon hot soon cold: this is no stability. But the old love was not so; men and women could love together seven years, and no licours lusts were between them, and then was love, truth, 25 and faithfulness: and lo, in like wise was used love in King Arthur's days. Wherefore I liken love nowadays unto summer and winter; for like as the one is hot and the other cold, so fareth love nowadays; therefore all ye that be lovers call unto your remembrance the month of May, like as did 30 Queen Guenever, for whom I make here a little mention, that while she lived she was a true lover, and therefore she had a good end.^o

Explicit liber Octodecimus

V

BOOK XXI

CHAPTER I

HOW SIR MORDRED PRESUMED AND TOOK ON HIM TO BE KING OF ENGLAND, AND WOULD HAVE MARRIED THE QUEEN, HIS FATHER'S WIFE

As Sir Mordred was ruler of all England,^o he did do make letters as though that they came from beyond the sea, and the letters specified that King Arthur was slain in battle with Sir Launcelot. Wherefore Sir Mordred made a parliament,^o and called the lords together, and there he made them to ⁵ choose him king; and so was he crowned at Canterbury, and held a feast there fifteen days; and afterward he drew him unto Winchester, and there he took the Queen Guenever, and said plainly that he would wed her which was his uncle's wife and his father's wife. And so he made ready for the feast, and a ¹⁰ day prefixed that they should be wedded; wherefore Queen Guenever was passing heavy. But she durst not discover her heart, but spake fair, and agreed to Sir Mordred's will. Then she desired of Sir Mordred for to go to London, to buy all manner of things that longed unto the wedding.^o And ¹⁵ because of her fair speech Sir Mordred trusted her well enough, and gave her leave to go. And so when she came to London she took the Tower of London, and suddenly in all haste pos-

sible she stuffed it with all manner of victual, and well garnished it with men, and so kept it.

Then when Sir Mordred wist and understood how he was beguiled, he was passing wroth out of measure. And ⁵ a short tale for to make, he went and laid a mighty siege about the Tower of London, and made many great assaults therat, and threw many great engines unto them, and shot great guns.^o But all might not prevail Sir Mordred, for Queen Guenever would never for fair speech nor for foul, ¹⁰ would never trust to come in his hands again.

Then came the Bishop of Canterbury, the which was a noble clerk and an holy man, and thus he said to Sir Mordred: Sir, what will ye do? will ye first displease God and sithen shame yourself, and all knighthood? Is not King Arthur ¹⁵ your uncle, no farther but your mother's brother, and on her himself King Arthur begat you upon his own sister, therefore how may you wed your father's wife? Sir, said the noble clerk, leave this opinion or I shall curse you with book and bell and candle.^o Do thou thy worst, said Sir Mordred, wit thou ²⁰ well I shall defy thee. Sir, said the Bishop, and wit you well I shall not fear me to do that me ought to do. Also where ye noise where my lord Arthur is slain, and that is not so, and therefore ye will make a foul work in this land. Peace, thou false priest, said Sir Mordred, for an thou chafe me any more ²⁵ I shall make strike off thy head. So the Bishop departed and did the cursing in the most orgulist wise that might be done. And then Sir Mordred sought the Bishop of Canterbury, for to have slain him. Then the Bishop fled, and took part of his goods with him, and went nigh unto Glastonbury; and there ³⁰ he was as priest hermit in a chapel, and lived in poverty and in holy prayers, for well he understood that mischievous war was at hand.

Then Sir Mordred sought on Queen Guenever by letters and

sonds, and by fair means and foul means, for to have her to come out of the Tower of London; but all this availed not, for she answered him shortly, openly and privily, that she had liefer slay herself than to be married with him. Then came word to Sir Mordred that King Arthur had araised the siege for 5 Sir Launcelot, and he was coming homeward with a great host, to be avenged upon Sir Mordred; wherefore Sir Mordred made write writs to all the barony of this land, and much people drew to him. For then was the common voice among them that with Arthur was none other life but war and strife, and 10 with Sir Mordred was great joy and bliss. Thus was Sir Arthur depraved, and evil said of. And many there were that King Arthur had made up of nought, and given them lands, might not then say him a good word. Lo ye all Englishmen, see ye not what a mischief here was! for he 15 that was the most king and knight of the world, and most loved the fellowship of noble knights, and by him they were all upholden, now might not these Englishmen hold them content with him. Lo thus was the old custom and usage of this land; and also men say that we of this land have not yet lost nor 20 forgotten that custom and usage. Alas, this is a great default of us Englishmen, for there may no thing please us no term. And so fared the people at that time, they were better pleased with Sir Mordred than they were with King Arthur; and much people drew unto Sir Mordred, and said they 25 would abide with him for better and for worse. And so Sir Mordred drew with a great host to Dover, for there he heard say that Sir Arthur would arrive, and so he thought to beat his own father from his lands; and the most part of all England held with Sir Mordred, the people were so new-fangle.^o

CHAPTER II

HOW AFTER THAT KING ARTHUR HAD TIDINGS, HE RETURNED
AND CAME TO DOVER, WHERE SIR MORDRED MET HIM TO
LET HIS LANDING; AND OF THE DEATH OF SIR GAWAINE

AND so as Sir Mordred was at Dover with his host, there came King Arthur with a great navy of ships, and galleys, and carracks. And there was Sir Mordred ready awaiting upon his landing, to let his own father to land upon the land that 5 he was king over. Then there was launching of great boats and small, and full of noble men of arms; and there was much slaughter of gentle knights, and many a full bold baron was laid full low, on both parties. But King Arthur was so courageous that there might no manner of knights let him to land, and 10 his knights fiercely followed him; and so they landed maugre Sir Mordred and all his power, and put Sir Mordred aback, that he fled and all his people.

So when this battle was done, King Arthur let bury his people that were dead. And then was noble Sir Gawaine found 15 in a great boat, lying more than half dead. When Sir Arthur wist that Sir Gawaine was laid so low, he went unto him; and there the king made sorrow out of measure, and took Sir Gawaine in his arms, and thrice he there swooned. And then when he awaked, he said: Alas, Sir Gawaine, my sister's son, 20 here now thou liest, the man in the world that I loved most; and now is my joy gone, for now, my nephew Sir Gawaine, I will discover me unto your person: in Sir Launcelot and you I most had my joy, and mine affiance, and now have I lost my joy of you both; wherefore all mine earthly joy is gone from 25 me. Mine uncle King Arthur, said Sir Gawaine, wit you well my death-day is come, and all is through mine own hastiness and

wilfulness; for I am smitten upon the old wound the which Sir Launcelot gave me, on the which I feel well I must die; and had Sir Launcelot been with you as he was, this unhappy war had never begun; and of all this am I causer, for Sir Launcelot and his blood, through their prowess, held all your ⁵ cankered enemies in subjection and daunger. And now, said Sir Gawaine, ye shall miss Sir Launcelot. But alas, I would not accord with him, and therefore, said Sir Gawaine, I pray you, fair uncle, that I may have paper, pen, and ink, that I may write to Sir Launcelot a cedle with mine own hands. ¹⁰

And then when paper and ink was brought, then Gawaine was set up weakly by King Arthur, for he was shrien a little to-fore; and then he wrote thus, as the French book maketh mention: Unto Sir Launcelot, flower of all noble knights that ever I heard of or saw by my days, I, Sir Gawaine, King Lot's ¹⁵ son of Orkney, sister's son unto the noble King Arthur, send thee greeting, and let thee have knowledge that the tenth day of May I was smitten upon the old wound that thou gavest me afore the city of Benwick, ^o and through the same wound that thou gavest me I am come to my death-day. And I will that ²⁰ all the world wit, that I, Sir Gawaine, knight of the Table Round, sought my death, and not through thy deserving, but it was mine own seeking; wherefore I beseech thee, Sir Launcelot, to return again unto this realm, and see my tomb, and pray some prayer more or less for my soul. And this same ²⁵ day that I wrote this cedle, I was hurt to the death in the same wound, the which I had of thy hand, Sir Launcelot; for of a more nobler man might I not be slain. Also Sir Launcelot, for all the love that ever was betwixt us, make no tarrying, but come over the sea in all haste, that thou mayst with thy ³⁰ noble knights rescue that noble king that made thee knight, that is my lord Arthur; for he is full straitly bestead with a false traitor, that is my half-brother, Sir Mordred; and he

hath let crown him king, and would have wedded my lady Queen Guenever, and so had he done had she not put herself in the Tower of London. And so the tenth day of May last past, my lord Arthur and we all landed upon them at Dover; 5 and there we put that false traitor, Sir Mordred, to flight, and there it misfortuned me to be stricken upon thy stroke. And at the date of this letter was written, but two hours and a half afore my death, written with mine own hand, and so subscribed with part of my heart's blood. And I require thee, 10 most famous knight of the world, that thou wilt see my tomb.° And then Sir Gawaine wept, and King Arthur wept; and then they swooned both. And when they awaked both, the king made Sir Gawaine to receive his Saviour. And then Sir 15 Gawaine prayed the king for to send for Sir Launcelot, and to cherish him above all other knights.

And so at the hour of noon Sir Gawaine yielded up the spirit; and then the king let inter him in a chapel within Dover Castle; and there yet all men may see the skull of him,° and the same wound is seen that Sir Launcelot gave 20 him in battle. Then was it told the king that Sir Mordred had pight a new field upon Barham Down.° And upon the morn the king rode thither to him, and there was a great battle betwixt them, and much people was slain on both parties; but at the last Sir Arthur's party stood best, and Sir 25 Mordred and his party fled unto Canterbury.

CHAPTER III

HOW AFTER, SIR GAWAINE'S GHOST APPEARED TO KING ARTHUR,
AND WARNED HIM THAT HE SHOULD NOT FIGHT THAT DAY

AND then the king let search all the towns for his knights that were slain, and interred them; and salved them with

soft salves that so sore were wounded. Then much people drew unto King Arthur. And then they said that Sir Mordred warred upon King Arthur with wrong. And then King Arthur drew him with his host down by the seaside, westward^o toward Salisbury; and there was a day assigned betwixt 5 King Arthur and Sir Mordred, that they should meet upon a down beside Salisbury,^o and not far from the seaside; and this day was assigned on a Monday after Trinity Sunday,^o whereof King Arthur was passing glad, that he might be avenged upon Sir Mordred. Then Sir Mordred araised much people about 10 London, for they of Kent, Southsex, and Surrey, Estsex, and of Southfolk, and of Northfolk, held the most part with Sir Mordred; and many a full noble knight drew unto Sir Mordred and to the king: but they that loved Sir Launcelot drew unto Sir Mordred.

15

So upon Trinity Sunday at night, King Arthur dreamed a wonderful dream, and that was this: that him seemed he sat upon a chaflet in a chair, and the chair was fast to a wheel, and thereupon sat King Arthur in the richest cloth of gold that might be made; and the king thought there 20 was under him, far from him, an hideous deep black water, and therein were all manner of serpents, and worms, and wild beasts, foul and horrible; and suddenly the king thought the wheel turned up-so-down, and he fell among the serpents, and every beast took him by a limb; and then the king cried 25 as he lay in his bed and slept: Help. And then knights, squires, and yeomen, awaked the king; and then he was so amazed that he wist not where he was; and then he fell a-slumbering again, not sleeping nor thoroughly waking. So the king seemed verily that there came Sir Gawaine^o unto him 30 with a number of fair ladies with him. And when King Arthur saw him, then he said: Welcome, my sister's son; I weened thou hadst been dead, and now I see thee alive,

much am I beholding unto Almighty Jesu. O fair nephew and my sister's son, what be these ladies that hither be come with you ? Sir, said Sir Gawaine, all these be ladies for whom I have foughten when I was man living, and all these 5 are those that I did battle for in righteous quarrel; and God hath given them that grace at their great prayer, because I did battle for them, that they should bring me hither unto you : thus much hath God given me leave, for to warn you of your death; for an ye fight as to-morn with Sir Mordred, 10 as ye both have assigned, doubt ye not ye must be slain, and the most part of your people on both parties. And for the great grace and goodness that almighty Jesu hath unto you, and for pity of you, and many more other good men there shall be slain, God hath sent me to you of his special grace, 15 to give you warning that in no wise ye do battle as to-morn, but that ye take a treaty for a month day; and proffer you largely, so as to-morn to be put in a delay. For within a month shall come Sir Launcelot with all his noble knights, and rescue you worshipfully, and slay Sir Mordred, and all 20 that ever will hold with him. Then Sir Gawaine and all the ladies vanished.

And anon the king called upon his knights, squires, and yeomen, and charged them wightly to fetch his noble lords and wise bishops unto him. And when they were come, the 25 king told them his avision, what Sir Gawaine had told him, and warned him that if he fought on the morn he should be slain. Then the king commanded Sir Lucan the Butler, and his brother Sir Bedivere, with two bishops with them, and charged them in any wise, an they might, Take a treaty 30 for a month day with Sir Mordred, and spare not, proffer him lands and goods as much as ye think best. So then they departed, and came to Sir Mordred, where he had a grim host of an hundred thousand men. And there they entreated

Sir Mordred long time ; and at the last Sir Mordred was agreed for to have Cornwall and Kent, by Arthur's days : after, all England, after the days of King Arthur.

CHAPTER IV

HOW BY MISADVENTURE OF AN ADDER THE BATTLE BEGAN,
WHERE MORDRED WAS SLAIN, AND ARTHUR HURT TO THE
DEATH

THEN were they condescended that King Arthur and Sir Mordred should meet betwixt both their hosts, and everych 5 of them should bring fourteen persons ; and they came with this word unto Arthur. Then said he : I am glad that this is done : and so he went into the field. And when Arthur should depart, he warned all his host that an they see any sword drawn : Look ye come on fiercely, and slay that 10 traitor, Sir Mordred, for I in no wise trust him. In like wise Sir Mordred warned his host that : An ye see any sword drawn, look that ye come on fiercely, and so slay all that ever before you standeth ; for in no wise I will not trust for this treaty, for I know well my father will be avenged on me. 15 And so they met as their appointment was, and so they were agreed and accorded thoroughly ; and wine was fetched, and they drank. Right soon came an adder out of a little heath bush, and it stung a knight on the foot. And when the knight felt him stung, he looked down and saw the adder, and 20 then he drew his sword to slay the adder, and thought of none other harm. And when the host on both parties saw that sword drawn, then they blew beams, trumpets, and horns, and shouted grimly. And so both hosts dressed them together. And King Arthur took his horse, and said : Alas 25

this unhappy day! and so rode to his party. And Sir Mordred in like wise. And never was there seen a more dolefuller battle in no Christian land; for there was but rushing and riding, foining and striking, and many a grim word was there spoken either to other, and many a deadly stroke. But ever King Arthur rode throughout the battle of Sir Mordred many times, and did full nobly as a noble king should, and at all times he fainted never; and Sir Mordred that day put him in devoir, and in great peril. And thus they fought 10 all the long day, and never stinted till the noble knights were laid to the cold earth; and ever they fought still till it was near night, and by that time was there an hundred thousand^o laid dead upon the down. Then was Arthur wood wroth out of measure, when he saw his people so slain 15 from him.

Then the king looked about him, and then was he ware, of all his host and of all his good knights, were left no more alive but two knights; that one was Sir Lucan the Butler, and his brother Sir Bedivere, and they were full sore wounded. 20 Jesu mercy, said the king, where are all my noble knights become? Alas that ever I should see this doleful day, for now, said Arthur, I am come to mine end. But would to God that I wist where were that traitor Sir Mordred, that hath caused all this mischief. Then was King Arthur ware where 25 Sir Mordred leaned upon his sword among a great heap of dead men. Now give me my spear, said Arthur unto Sir Lucan, for yonder I have espied the traitor that all this woe hath wrought. Sir, let him be, said Sir Lucan, for he is unhappy; and if ye pass this unhappy day ye shall be right 30 well revenged upon him. Good lord, remember ye of your night's dream, and what the spirit of Sir Gawaine told you this night, yet God of his great goodness hath preserved you hitherto. Therefore, for God's sake, my lord, leave off by

this, for blessed be God ye have won the field, for here we be three alive, and with Sir Mordred is none alive; and if ye leave off now this wicked day of destiny is past. Tide me death, betide me life, saith the king, now I see him yonder alone he shall never escape mine hands, for at a better avail 5 shall I never have him. God speed you well, said Sir Bedivere.

Then the king gat his spear in both hands, and ran toward Sir Mordred, crying: Traitor, now is thy death-day come. And when Sir Mordred heard Sir Arthur, he ran until him with 10 his drawn sword in his hand. And there King Arthur smote Sir Mordred under the shield, with a foin of his spear, throughout the body, more than a fathom. And when Sir Mordred felt that he had his death wound he thrust himself with the might that he had up to the bur of King Arthur's spear. 15 And right so he smote his father Arthur, with his sword holden in both his hands, on the side of the head, that the sword pierced the helmet and the brain-pan, and therewithal Sir Mordred fell stark dead to the earth; and the noble Arthur fell in a swoon to the earth, and there he swooned ofttimes. 20 And Sir Lucan the Butler and Sir Bedivere ofttimes heaved him up. And so weakly they led him betwixt them both, to a little chapel not far from the seaside. And when the king was there he thought him well eased.

Then heard they people cry in the field. Now go thou, 25 Sir Lucan, said the king, and do me to wit what betokens that noise in the field. So Sir Lucan departed, for he was grievously wounded in many places. And so as he yede, he saw and hearkened by the moonlight, how that pillers and robbers were come into the field, to pill and to rob many a 30 full noble knight of brooches, and beads, of many a good ring, and of many a rich jewel; and who that were not dead all out, there they slew them for their harness and their riches.

When Sir Lucan understood this work, he came to the king as soon as he might, and told him all what he had heard and seen. Therefore by my rede, said Sir Lucan, it is best that we bring you to some town. I would it were so, said the king.

CHAPTER V

HOW KING ARTHUR COMMANDED TO CAST HIS SWORD EXCALIBUR INTO THE WATER, AND HOW HE WAS DELIVERED TO LADIES IN A BARGE

5 BUT I may not stand, mine head works so. Ah Sir Launcelot, said King Arthur, this day have I sore missed thec: alas, that ever I was against thee, for now have I my death, whereof Sir Gawaine me warned in my dream. Then Sir Lucan took up the king the one part, and Sir Bedivere the other part, and 10 in the lifting the king swooned; and Sir Lucan fell in a swoon with the lift, that the part of his guts fell out of his body, and therewith the noble knight's heart brast. And when the king awoke, he beheld Sir Lucan, how he lay foaming at the mouth, and part of his guts lay at his feet. Alas, said the 15 king, this is to me a full heavy sight, to see this noble duke so die for my sake, for he would have holpen me, that had more need of help than I. Alas, he would not complain him, his heart was so set to help me: now Jesu have mercy upon his soul ! Then Sir Bedivere wept for the death of his brother. 20 Leave this mourning and weeping, said the king, for all this will not avail me, for wit thou well an I might live myself, the death of Sir Lucan would grieve me evermore; but my time hieth fast, said the king. Therefore, said Arthur unto Sir Bedivere, take thou Excalibur, my good sword, and go 25 with it to yonder water side, and when thou comest there I

charge thee throw my sword in that water, and come again and tell me what thou there seest. My lord, said Bedivere, your commandment shall be done, and lightly bring you word again.^o

So Sir Bedivere departed, and by the way he beheld that ⁵ noble sword, that the pommel and the haft was all of precious stones; and then he said to himself: If I throw this rich sword in the water, thereof shall never come good, but harm and loss. And then Sir Bedivere hid Excalibur under a tree. And so, as soon as he might, he came again unto the king, ¹⁰ and said he had been at the water, and had thrown the sword in the water. What saw thou there? said the king. Sir, he said, I saw nothing but waves and winds. That is untruly said of thee, said the king, therefore go thou lightly again, and do my commandment; as thou art to me lief and dear, ¹⁵ spare not, but throw it in. Then Sir Bedivere returned again, and took the sword in his hand; and then him thought sin and shame to throw away that noble sword, and so eft he hid the sword, and returned again, and told the king that he had been at the water, and done his commandment. What ²⁰ saw thou there? said the king. Sir, he said, I saw nothing but the waters wap and waves wan.^o Ah, traitor untrue, said King Arthur, now hast thou betrayed me twice. Who would have weened that, thou that hast been to me so lief and dear? and thou art named a noble knight, and would betray ²⁵ me for the richness of the sword. But now go again lightly, for thy long tarrying putteth me in great jeopardy of my life, for I have taken cold. And but if thou do now as I bid thee, if ever I may see thee, I shall slay thee with mine own hands; for thou wouldest for my rich sword see me dead.

Then Sir Bedivere departed, and went to the sword, and lightly took it up, and went to the water side; and there he bound the girdle about the hilts, and then he threw the sword

as far into the water as he might; and there came an arm and an hand above the water and met it, and caught it, and so shook it thrice and brandished, and then vanished away the hand with the sword in the water. So Sir Bedivere came again to the king, and told him what he saw. Alas, said the king, help me hence, for I dread me I have tarried over long. Then Sir Bedivere took the king upon his back, and so went with him to that water side. And when they were at the water side, even fast by the bank hoved a little barge with many fair ladies in it, and among them all was a queen, and all they had black hoods, and all they wept and shrieked when they saw King Arthur. Now put me into the barge, said the king. And so he did softly; and there received him three queens with great mourning; and so they set them down, and in one of their laps King Arthur laid his head. And then that queen said : Ah, dear brother, why have ye tarried so long from me ? alas, this wound on your head hath caught overmuch cold. And so then they rowed from the land, and Sir Bedivere beheld all those ladies go from him. Then Sir Bedivere cried : Ah my lord Arthur, what shall become of me, now ye go from me and leave me here alone among mine enemies ? Comfort thyself, said the king, and do as well as thou mayst, for in me is no trust for to trust in; for I will into the vale of Avilion^o to heal me of my grievous wound: and if thou hear never more of me, pray for my soul.^o But ever the queens and ladies wept and shrieked, that it was pity to hear. And as soon as Sir Bedivere had lost the sight of the barge, he wept and wailed, and so took the forest; and so he went all that night, and in the morning he was ware betwixt two holts hoar, of a chapel and an hermitage.

CHAPTER VI

HOW SIR BEDIVERE FOUND HIM ON THE MORROW DEAD IN AN HERMITAGE, AND HOW HE ABODE THERE WITH THE HERMIT

THEN was Sir Bedivere glad, and thither he went; and when he came into the chapel, he saw where lay an hermit grovelling on all four, there fast by a tomb was new graven. When the hermit saw Sir Bedivere he knew him well, for he was but little to-fore Bishop of Canterbury, that Sir 5 Mordred flemed. Sir, said Bedivere, what man is there interred that ye pray so fast for? Fair son, said the hermit, I wot not verily, but by deeming. But this night, at midnight, here came a number of ladies, and brought hither a dead corpse, and prayed me to bury him; and here they 10 offered an hundred tapers, and they gave me an hundred besants. Alas, said Sir Bedivere, that was my lord King Arthur, that here lieth buried in this chapel. Then Sir Bedivere swooned; and when he awoke he prayed the hermit he might abide with him still there, to live with fasting and 15 prayers. For from hence will I never go, said Sir Bedivere, by my will, but all the days of my life here to pray for my lord Arthur. Ye are welcome to me, said the hermit, for I know ye better than ye ween that I do. Ye are the bold Bedivere, and the full noble duke, Sir Lucan the Butler, was 20 your brother. Then Sir Bedivere told the hermit all as ye have heard to-fore. So there bode Sir Bedivere with the hermit that was to-fore Bishop of Canterbury, and there Sir Bedivere put upon him poor clothes, and served the hermit full lowly in fasting and in prayers.

Thus of Arthur I find never more written in books that be authorised, nor more of the very certainty of his death heard

I never read, but thus was he led away in a ship wherein were three queens; that one was King Arthur's sister, Queen Morgan le Fay^o; the other was the Queen of Northgalis; the third was the Queen of the Waste Lands. Also there was 5 Nimue,^o the chief lady of the lake, that had wedded Pelleas the good knight; and this lady had done much for King Arthur, for she would never suffer Sir Pelleas to be in no place where he should be in danger of his life; and so he lived to the uttermost of his days with her in great rest. More of the 10 death of King Arthur could I never find, but that ladies brought him to his burials; and such one was buried there, that the hermit bare witness that sometime was Bishop of Canterbury, but yet the hermit knew not in certain that he was verily the body of King Arthur: for this tale Sir 15 Bedivere, knight of the Table Round, made it to be written.^o

CHAPTER VII

OF THE OPINION OF SOME MEN OF THE DEATH OF KING ARTHUR; AND HOW QUEEN GUENEVER MADE HER A NUN IN ALMES- BURY

YET some men say in many parts of England that King Arthur is not dead, but had by the will of our Lord Jesu into another place; and men say that he shall come again, and he shall win the holy cross. I will not say it shall be 20 so, but rather I will say: here in this world he changed his life. But many men say that there is written upon his tomb this verse:

Nic jacet Arthurus, Rex quondam, Rexque futurus.

Thus leave I here Sir Bedivere with the hermit, that 25 dwelled that time in a chapel beside Glastonbury, and

there was his hermitage. And so they lived in their prayers, and fastings, and great abstinence. And when Queen Guenever understood that King Arthur was slain, and all the noble knights, Sir Mordred and all the remnant, then the queen stole away, and five ladies with her,⁵ and so she went to Almesbury; and there she let make herself a nun, and ware white clothes and black, and great penance she took, as ever did sinful lady in this land, and never creature could make her merry; but lived in fasting, prayers, and alms-deeds, that all manner of people marvelled how ¹⁰ virtuously she was changed. Now leave we Queen Guenever in Almesbury, a nun in white clothes and black, and there she was Abbess and ruler as reason would; and turn we from her, and speak we of Sir Launcelot du Lake.^o

CHAPTER VIII

HOW WHEN SIR LAUNCELOT HEARD OF THE DEATH OF KING ARTHUR, AND OF SIR GAWAINE, AND OTHER MATTERS, HE CAME INTO ENGLAND

AND when he heard in his country that Sir Mordred was ¹⁵ crowned king in England, and made war against King Arthur, his own father, and would let him to land in his own land; also it was told Sir Launcelot how that Sir Mordred had laid siege about the Tower of London, because the queen would not wed him; then was Sir Launcelot wroth ²⁰ out of measure, and said to his kinsmen: Alas, that double traitor Sir Mordred,^o now me repenteth that ever he escaped my hands, for much shame hath he done unto my lord Arthur; for all I feel by the doleful letter that my lord Sir Gawaine sent me, on whose soul Jesu have mercy, that my lord Arthur ²⁵

is full hard bestead. Alas, said Sir Launcelot, that ever I should live to hear that most noble king that made me knight thus to be overset with his subject^o in his own realm. And this doleful letter that my lord, Sir Gawaine, hath sent me ⁵ afore his death, praying me to see his tomb, wit you well his doleful words shall never go from mine heart, for he was a full noble knight as ever was born; and in an unhappy hour was I born that ever I should have that unhap to slay first Sir Gawaine, Sir Gaheris the good knight, and mine own friend ¹⁰ Sir Gareth,^o that full noble knight. Alas, I may say I am unhappy, said Sir Launcelot, that ever I should do thus unhappily, and, alas, yet might I never have hap to slay that traitor, Sir Mordred.

Leave your complaints, said Sir Bors, and first revenge you ¹⁵ of the death of Sir Gawaine; and it will be well done that ye see Sir Gawaine's tomb, and secondly that ye revenge my lord Arthur, and my lady, Queen Guenever. I thank you, said Sir Launcelot, for ever ye will my worship.

Then they made them ready in all the haste that might be, ²⁰ with ships and galleys, with Sir Launcelot and his host to pass into England. And so he passed over the sea till he came to Dover, and there he landed with seven kings, and the number was hideous to behold. Then Sir Launcelot spered of men of Dover where was King Arthur become. Then the ²⁵ people told him how that he was slain, and Sir Mordred and an hundred thousand died on a day; and how Sir Mordred gave King Arthur there the first battle at his landing, and there was good Sir Gawaine slain; and on the morn Sir Mordred fought with the king upon Barham Down, and ³⁰ there the king put Sir Mordred to the worse. Alas, said Sir Launcelot, this is the heaviest tidings that ever came to me. Now, fair sirs, said Sir Launcelot, shew me the tomb of Sir Gawaine. And then certain people of the town brought ~~him~~

into the castle of Dover, and shewed him the tomb. Then Sir Launcelot kneeled down and wept, and prayed heartily for his soul. And that night he made a dole, and all they that would come had as much flesh, fish, wine and ale, and every man and woman had twelve pence, come who would. Thus ⁵ with his own hand dealt he this money, in a mourning gown; and ever he wept, and prayed them to pray for the soul of Sir Gawaine. And on the morn all the priests and clerks that might be gotten in the country were there, and sang mass of Requiem; and there offered first Sir Launcelot, and he ¹⁰ offered an hundred pound; and then the seven kings offered forty pound apiece; and also there was a thousand knights, and each of them offered a pound; and the offering dured from morn till night, and Sir Launcelot lay two nights on his tomb in prayers and weeping. ¹⁵

Then on the third day Sir Launcelot called the kings, dukes, earls, barons, and knights, and said thus: My fair lords, I thank you all of your coming into this country with me, but we came too late, and that shall repent me while I live, but against death may no man rebel. But sithen it is so, said ²⁰ Sir Launcelot, I will myself ride and seek my lady, Queen Guenever, for as I hear say she hath had great pain and much disease; and I heard say that she is fled into the west. Therefore ye all shall abide me here, and but if I come again within fifteen days, then take your ships and your fellowship, and ²⁵ depart into your country, for I will do as I say to you.

CHAPTER IX

HOW SIR LAUNCELOT DEPARTED TO SEEK THE QUEEN GUEN-
EVER, AND HOW HE FOUND HER AT ALMESBURY

THEN came Sir Bors de Ganis, and said: My lord Sir Launcelot, what think ye for to do, now to ride in this realm? wit ye well ye shall find few friends. Be as be may, said Sir Launcelot, keep you still here, for I will forth on my journey, 5 and no man nor child shall go with me. So it was no boot to strive, but he departed and rode westerly, and there he sought a seven or eight days; and at the last he came to a nunnery, and then was Queen Guenever ware of Sir Launcelot as he walked in the cloister. And when she saw him there 10 she swooned thrice, that all the ladies and gentlewomen had work enough to hold the queen up. So when she might speak, she called ladies and gentlewomen to her, and said: Ye marvel, fair ladies, why I make this fare. Truly, she said, it is for the sight of yonder knight that yonder standeth; where- 15 fore I pray you all call him to me.

When Sir Launcelot was brought to her, then she said to all the ladies: Through this man and me hath all this war been wrought, and the death of the most noblest knights of the world; for through our love that we have loved together 20 is my most noble lord slain. Therefore, Sir Launcelot, wit thou well I am set in such a plight to get my soul-heal; and yet I trust through God's grace that after my death to have a sight of the blessed face of Christ, and at domesday to sit on his right side, for as sinful as ever I was are saints in heaven. 25 Therefore, Sir Launcelot, I require thee and beseech thee heartily, for all the love that ever was betwixt us, that thou never see me more in the visage; and I command thee, on

God's behalf, that thou forsake my company, and to thy kingdom thou turn again, and keep well thy realm from war and wrack; for as well as I have loved thee, mine heart will not serve me to see thee, for through thee and me is the flower of kings and knights destroyed; therefore, Sir Launcelot, 5 go to thy realm, and there take thee a wife, and live with her with joy and bliss; and I pray thee heartily, pray for me to our Lord that I may amend my misliving. Now, sweet madam, said Sir Launcelot, would ye that I should now return again unto my country, and there to wed a lady? Nay, madam, 10 wit you well that shall I never do, for I shall never be so false to you of that I have promised; but the same destiny that ye have taken you to, I will take me unto, for to please Jesu, and ever for you I cast me specially to pray. If thou wilt do so, said the queen, hold thy promise, but I may never believe 15 but that thou wilt turn to the world again. Well, madam, said he, ye say as pleaseth you, yet wist you me never false of my promise, and God defend but I should forsake the world as ye have done. For in the quest of the Sangreal I had forsaken the vanities of the world had not your lord been. 20 And if I had done so at that time, with my heart, will, and thought, I had passed all the knights that were in the Sangreal except Sir Galahad, my son. And therefore, lady, sithen ye have taken you to perfection, I must needs take me to perfection, of right. For I take record of God, in you I have 25 had mine earthly joy; and if I had found you now so disposed, I had cast me to have had you into mine own realm.

CHAPTER X

HOW SIR LAUNCELOT CAME TO THE HERMITAGE WHERE THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY WAS, AND HOW HE TOOK THE HABIT ON HIM

BUT sithen I find you thus disposed, I ensure you faithfully, I will ever take me to penance, and pray while my life lasteth, if I may find any hermit, either gray or white,^o that will receive me. Wherefore, madam, I pray you kiss me and never no more. Nay, said the queen, that shall I never do, but abstain you from such works: and they departed. But there was never so hard an hearted man but he would have wept to see the dolour that they made; for there was lamentation as they had been stung with spears; and many times they swooned, and the ladies bare the queen to her chamber.

And Sir Launcelot awoke, and went and took his horse, and rode all that day and all night in a forest, weeping. And at the last he was ware of an hermitage and a chapel stood betwixt two cliffs; and then he heard a little bell ring to mass, and thither he rode and alighted, and tied his horse to the gate, and heard mass. And he that sang mass was the Bishop of Canterbury. Both the Bishop and Sir Bedivere knew Launcelot, and they spake together after mass. But when Sir Bedivere had told his tale all whole, Sir Launcelot's heart almost brast for sorrow, and Sir Launcelot threw his arms abroad, and said: Alas, who may trust this world! And then he kneeled down on his knee, and prayed the Bishop to shrieve him and assoil him. And then he besought the Bishop that he might be his brother. Then the Bishop said I will gladly; and there he put an habit upon Sir Launcelot and there he served God day and night with prayers and fastings.

Thus the great host abode at Dover. And then Sir Lionel took fifteen lords with him, and rode to London to seek Sir Launcelot; and there Sir Lionel was slain and many of his lords. Then Sir Bors de Ganis made the great host for to go home again; and Sir Bors, Sir Ector de Maris, Sir Blamore, 5 Sir Bleoberis, with more other of Sir Launcelot's kin, took on them to ride all England overthwart and endlong, to seek Sir Launcelot. So Sir Bors by fortune rode so long till he came to the same chapel where Sir Launcelot was; and so Sir Bors heard a little bell knell, that rang to mass; and there 10 he alighted and heard mass. And when mass was done, the Bishop, Sir Launcelot, and Sir Bedivere, came to Sir Bors. And when Sir Bors saw Sir Launcelot in that manner clothing, then he prayed the Bishop that he might be in the same suit. And so there was an habit put upon him, and there he lived 15 in prayers and fasting. And within half a year, there was come Sir Galihud, Sir Galihodin, Sir Blamore, Sir Bleoberis, Sir Villiars, Sir Clarras, and Sir Gahalantine.^o So all these seven noble knights there abode still. And when they saw Sir Launcelot had taken him to such perfection, they had no 20 lust to depart, but took such an habit as he had.

Thus they endured in great penance six year; and then Sir Launcelot took the habit of priesthood of the Bishop, and a twelvemonth he sang mass. And there was none of these other knights but they read in books, and holp for 25 to sing mass, and rang bells, and did bodily all manner of service. And so their horses went where they would, for they took no regard of no worldly riches. For when they saw Sir Launcelot endure such penance, in prayers, and fastings, they took no force what pain they endured, for to see 30 the noblest knight of the world take such abstinence that he waxed full lean. And thus upon a night, there came a vision to Sir Launcelot, and charged him, in remission of his sins,

to haste him unto Almesbury: And by then thou come there, thou shalt find Queen Guenever dead. And therefore take thy fellows with thee, and purvey them of an horse bier, and fetch thou the corpse of her, and bury her by her husband,
5 the noble King Arthur. So this avision came to Sir Launce-
lot thrice in one night.

CHAPTER XI

HOW SIR LAUNCELOT WENT WITH HIS SEVEN FELLOWS TO
ALMESBURY, AND FOUND THERE QUEEN GUENEVER DEAD,
WHOM THEY BROUGHT TO GLASTONBURY

THEN Sir Launcelot rose up or day, and told the hermit. It were well done, said the hermit, that ye made you ready, and that you disobey not the avision. Then Sir Launcelot
10 took his eight fellows with him, and on foot they yede from Glastonbury to Almesbury, the which is little more than thirty mile.^o And thither they came within two days, for they were weak and feeble to go. And when Sir Launcelot was come to Almesbury within the nunnery, Queen Guenever died
15 but half an hour afore. And the ladies told Sir Launcelot that Queen Guenever told them all or she passed, that Sir Launcelot had been priest near a twelvemonth, And hither he cometh as fast as he may to fetch my corpse; and beside my lord, King Arthur, he shall bury me. Wherefore the
20 queen said in hearing of them all: I beseech Almighty God that I may never have power to see Sir Launcelot with my worldly eyen; and thus, said all the ladies, was ever her prayer these two days, till she was dead. Then Sir Launcelot saw her visage, but he wept not greatly, but sighed. And
25 so he did all the observance of the service himself, both the

dirige, and on the morn he sang mass. And there was ordained an horse bier; and so with an hundred torches ever brenning about the corpse of the queen, and ever Sir Launcelot with his eight fellows went about the horse bier, singing and reading many an holy orison, and frankincense 5 upon the corpse incensed. Thus Sir Launcelot and his eight fellows went on foot from Almesbury unto Glastonbury.

And when they were come to the chapel and the hermitage, there she had a dirige, with great devotion. And on the morn the hermit that sometime was Bishop of Canterbury sang the 10 mass of Requiem with great devotion. And Sir Launcelot was the first that offered, and then also his eight fellows. And then she was wrapped in cered cloth of Raines,° from the top to the toe, in thirtyfold; and after she was put in a web of lead, and then in a coffin of marble. And when she 15 was put in the earth Sir Launcelot swooned, and lay long still, while the hermit came and awaked him, and said: Ye be to blame, for ye displease God with such manner of sorrow-making. Truly, said Sir Launcelot, I trust I do not displease God, for He knoweth mine intent. For my sorrow was not, 20 nor is not, for any rejoicing of sin, but my sorrow may never have end. For when I remember of her beauty, and of her noblesse, that was both with her king and with her, so when I saw his corpse and her corpse so lie together, truly mine heart would not serve to sustain my careful body.° Also 25 when I remember me how by my default, mine orgule and my pride, that they were both laid full low, that were peerless that ever was living of Christian people, wit you well, said Sir Launcelot, this remembered, of their kindness and mine unkindness, sank so to mine heart, that I might not sustain 30 myself. So the French book maketh mention.

CHAPTER XII

HOW SIR LAUNCELOT BEGAN TO SICKEN, AND AFTER DIED,
WHOSE BODY WAS BORNE TO JOYOUS GARD FOR TO BE
BURIED

THEN Sir Launcelot never after ate but little meat, ne
drank, till he was dead. For then he sickened more and
more, and dried, and dwined^o away. For the Bishop nor
none of his fellows might not make him to eat, and little
5 he drank, that he was waxen by a cubit shorter than he
was, that the people could not know him. For evermore,
day and night, he prayed, but sometime he slumbered a
broken sleep; ever he was lying grovelling on the tomb
of King Arthur and Queen Guenever. And there was no
10 comfort that the Bishop, nor Sir Bors, nor none of his fellows,
could make him, it availed not. So within six weeks after,
Sir Launcelot fell sick, and lay in his bed; and then he sent
for the Bishop that there was hermit, and all his true fellows.
Then Sir Launcelot said with dreary steven: Sir Bishop, I
15 pray you give to me all my rites that longeth to a Christian
man. It shall not need you, said the hermit and all his fel-
lows, it is but heaviness of your blood, ye shall be well mended
by the grace of God to-morn. My fair lords, said Sir Launce-
lot, wit you well my careful body will into the earth, I have
20 warning more than now I will say; therefore give me my rites.
So when he was houseled and anealed, and had all that a
Christian ought to have, he prayed the Bishop that his fellows
might bear his body to Joyous Gard. Some men say it was
Alnwick^o and some men say it was Bamborough.^o Howbeit,
25 said Sir Launcelot, me repenteth sore, but I made mine
avow sometime, that in Joyous Gard I would be buried.

And because of breaking of mine avow, I pray you all, lead me thither. Then there was weeping and wringing of hands among his fellows.

So at a season of the night they all went to their beds, for they all lay in one chamber. And so after midnight, 5 against day, the Bishop [that] then was hermit, as he lay in his bed asleep, he fell upon a great laughter. And therewith all the fellowship awoke, and came to the Bishop, and asked him what he ailed. Ah Jesu mercy, said the Bishop, why did ye awake me? I was never in all my life so merry 10 and so well at ease. Wherefore? said Sir Bors. Truly, said the Bishop, here was Sir Launcelot with me with mo angels than ever I saw men in one day. And I saw the angels heave up Sir Launcelot unto heaven, and the gates of heaven opened against him. It is but dretching of svevens, 15 said Sir Bors, for I doubt not Sir Launcelot aileth nothing but good. It may well be, said the Bishop; go ye to his bed, and then shall ye prove the sooth. So when Sir Bors and his fellows came to his bed they found him stark dead, and he lay as he had smiled, and the sweetest savour about him 20 that ever they felt.

Then was there weeping and wringing of hands, and the greatest dole they made that ever made men. And on the morn the Bishop did his mass of Requiem; and after, the Bishop and all the nine knights put Sir Launcelot in the same 25 horse bier that Queen Guenever was laid in to-fore that she was buried. And so the Bishop and they all together went with the body of Sir Launcelot daily, till they came to Joyous Gard; and ever they had an hundred torches brenning about him. And so within fifteen days they came to Joyous Gard. 30 And there they laid his corpse in the body of the quire, and sang and read many psalters and prayers over him and about him. And ever his visage was laid open and naked, that all

folks might behold him. For such was the custom in those days, that all men of worship should so lie with open visage till that they were buried. And right thus as they were at their service, there came Sir Ector de Maris, that had
5 seven years sought all England, Scotland, and Wales, seeking his brother, Sir Launcelot.

CHAPTER XIII

HOW SIR ECTOR FOUND SIR LAUNCELOT HIS BROTHER DEAD,
AND HOW CONSTANTINE REIGNÉD NEXT AFTER ARTHUR;
AND OF THE END OF THIS BOOK

AND when Sir Ector heard such noise and light in the
quire of Joyous Gard, he alighted and put his horse from
him, and came into the quire, and there he saw men sing
10 and weep. And all they knew Sir Ector, but he knew not
them. Then went Sir Bors unto Sir Ector, and told him
how there lay his brother, Sir Launcelot, dead; and then
Sir Ector threw his shield, sword, and helm from him. And
when he beheld Sir Launcelot's visage, he fell down in a
15 swoon. And when he waked it were hard any tongue to tell
the doleful complaints that he made for his brother. Ah
Launcelot, he said, thou were head of all Christian knights,
and now I dare say, said Sir Ector, thou Sir Launcelot, there
thou liest, that thou were never matched of earthly knight's
20 hand. And thou were the courteoust knight that ever
bare shield. And thou were the truest friend to thy lover
that ever bestrad horse. And thou were the truest lover of
a sinful man that ever loved woman. And thou were the
kindest man that ever struck with sword. And thou were
25 the goodliest person that ever came among press of knights.

And thou was the meekest man and the gentlest that ever ate in hall among ladies. And thou were the sternest knight to thy mortal foe that ever put spear in the rest.^o Then there was weeping and dolour out of measure.

Thus they kept Sir Launcelot's corpse aloft fifteen days, 5 and then they buried it with great devotion. And then at leisure they went all with the Bishop of Canterbury to his hermitage, and there they were together more than a month. Then Sir Constantine,^o that was Sir Cador's son of Cornwall, was chosen king of England. And he was a full noble knight, 10 and worshipfully he ruled this realm. And then this King Constantine sent for the Bishop of Canterbury, for he heard say where he was. And so he was restored unto his Bishopric, and left that hermitage. And Sir Bedivere was there ever still hermit to his life's end. Then Sir Bors de Ganis, Sir 15 Ector de Maris, Sir Gahalantine, Sir Galihud, Sir Galihodin, Sir Blamore, Sir Bleoberis, Sir Villiars le Valiant, Sir Clarrus of Clermont, all these knights drew them to their countries. Howbeit King Constantine would have had them with him, but they would not abide in this realm. And there they all 20 lived in their countries as holy men. And some English books^o make mention that they went never out of England after the death of Sir Launcelot, but that was but favour of makers.^o For the French book maketh mention, and is authorised, that Sir Bors, Sir Ector, Sir Blamore, and Sir 25 Bleoberis, went into the Holy Land thereas Jesu Christ was quick and dead, and anon as they had stablished their lands. For the book saith, so Sir Launcelot commanded them for to do, or ever he passed out of this world. And these four knights did many battles upon the miscreants or Turks. 30 And there they died upon a Good Friday for God's sake.

Here is the end of the book of King Arthur, and of his noble knights of the Round Table, that when they were whole together there

was ever an hundred and forty.^o And here is the end of the death of Arthur. I pray you all, gentlemen and gentlewomen that readeth this book of Arthur and his knights, from the beginning to the ending, pray for me while I am alive, that God send me good deliverance, and when I am dead, I pray you all pray for my soul. For this book was ended the ninth year of the reign of King Edward the Fourth,^o by Sir Thomas Maleore, knight, as Jesu help him for his great might, as he is the servant of Jesu both day and night.

Thus endeth this noble and joyous book entitled *Le Morte Darthur*. Notwithstanding it treateth of the birth, life, and acts of the said King Arthur, of his noble knights of the Round Table, their marvellous enquests and adventures, the achieving of the Sangreal, and in the end the dolorous death and departing out of this world of them all. Which book was reduced into English by Sir Thomas Malory, knight, as afore is said, and by me divided into twenty-one books, chaptered and emprinted, and finished in the abbey, Westminster, the last day of July the year of our Lord **MCCLXXXV**.

Caxton me fieri fecit

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NOTES

PREFACE OF WILLIAM CAXTON

Judas Machabeus. A Hebrew patriot, who by his defeat of Nicanor, in 165 B.C., almost succeeded in restoring Hebrew independence. The two books of Maccabees are in the Apocrypha.

Godfrey of Boloine. Godfrey of Bouillon was a leader of the first Crusades. In 1099, he was elected King of Jerusalem, which title, however, he exchanged for that of Protector of the Holy Sepulchre. He completed the conquest of the Holy Land by defeating the Sultan of Egypt, in the plain of Ascalon, August 12, 1099. He was born at Brabant in 1061, and died at Jerusalem, July 18, 1100.

made a book. “‘Godefray of Boleyn’ was printed by Caxton in 1481.” — SOMMER, *Malory*, II, p. 155 n. 1.

Glastonbury. See note on “Avilion,” Book XXI, Ch. 5. **Policronicron.** *Polychronicon*, a chronicle by Ralph Higden, monk of the Benedictine Abbey of St. Werburg’s at Chester. The date is about 1352.

Bochas. A book printed in 1475 by Georg Husner in Strassburg. It begins, “Ioannis Boccacii de Cercaldis historiographi prologes in libros incipit.” The eighth book contains one chapter entitled “De Arturo britonum rege.” Sommer, *Malory*, II, p. 154 n. 3.

Galfridus. Geoffrey of Monmouth. See Introduction.

Imperator. *Gallie* is France; *Dacie*, Denmark.

Gawaine’s skull and Cradok’s mantle. In the ballad of “The Boy and the Mantle” (Child, Book I, No. 1), Craddocke’s wife wins a mantle which is to be hers who is most faithful to her husband. Child (*English and Scottish Ballads*, Vol. I, p. 5), in commenting on this ballad, speaks of the horn, the mantle, and the knife of which it tells the story, and adds: “All three of these, by the way, are claimed by the Welsh as a part of the

insignia of Ancient Britain, and the special property of Tegau Eurvron, the wife of Caradog with the strong arm. (Jones, *Bardic Museum*, p. 49.)"

reduced it into English. Malory complete may seem rather a long drawn out romance to us, but it is perfectly true that Malory "reduced it" in the literal sense of the word, the romances which he followed being many times longer than his retelling of them.

xxxvi chapters. In reality Book VII has only thirty-five chapters, Ch. XXV having been numbered XXVI by Caxton.

shall follow hereafter. In Caxton the "Table of Rubrysshe of the Content of the Chapters" follows. In this edition, the rubric for each chapter is printed at the beginning of that chapter, and the table omitted.

BOOK I

1 : 1. Uther Pendragon. According to Professor Rhys (*A. L.*, p. 9) Uthr Bendragon is one of the many names of the head of Hades. In Milton's *Paradise Lost*, I, ll. 579 ff., we find:—

"What resounds
"In fable or romance of Uther's son,
"Begirt by British and Armoric knights,"

showing the interest that Milton had taken in the Arthurian epic.

1 : 4. Duke of Tintagil. Geoffrey of Monmouth calls him Gorlois, and so we find the name in Tennyson. Tintagel is a small town in Cornwall. Dr. Maynadier thus describes it: "Finally on the Cornish coast is that remarkable promontory, Tintagel. As you drive towards it from the railway station, you wonder why poets should have celebrated the place, for the Cornish country, rolling in low hills crossed by hedges and stone walls is treeless, desolate, unfriendly; but when you come to the sea, all is poetic. You walk down a steep little 'combe' between the cliffs to the very edge of the water, and before you, almost an island, is the great rock of Tintagel. From the chasm which parts it from the mainland

cliff, you follow a rough path up its precipitous sides to a gate in what little remains of the old castle wall; and passing through that to the grassy, uneven plateau of Tintagel Head, you feel for the moment alone with the sea. On three sides it stretches before you; the air is charged with its salt smell and cool breath. Then, turning to the north, you see far off the Isle of Lundy, light blue. Beyond it, a mistier blue, the Devon coast runs out in a long point. Nearer are the dark Cornish cliffs, with the sea washing and breaking below them, always more distinct in color and outline as the eye follows them from the distance to the deep chasm between the Head and the mainland; and then to the southwest, the cliffs again, now curving inward like a bay, then thrusting out to a bare headland, with here and there a needle-rock rising from the sea in front of them, to mark where the headlands once reached. There is no sound but the breaking of the waves—a swish and a roar—never-ceasing, and the occasional screech of a gull, or, if the breeze is from the land, the cawing of rooks.”—*Arthur of the English Poets*, pp. 184–185.

An interesting article on “Tintagel and its Arthurian Traditions” by Mr. Arthur L. Salmon, will be found in *Temple Bar*, Vol. 131, pp. 25–33.

1 : 7. *Igraine*. Igraine or Igerne. In Mr. Warwick Deeping’s *Uther and Igraine* we have one of the modern novels of Arthurian subjects which are interesting at least as the newest attempts to use the old material.

2 : 13. *that he hath*. The incorrect sequence of tenses here is due to the confusion of direct and indirect discourse which is common in Malory. See Baldwin, § 263.

2 : 16. *Terrabil*. Sommer notes (*Malory*, II, p. 179 n. 2) that Geoffrey of Monmouth calls this castle *Dimilioc*, but that in the *Merlin*, supposedly Malory’s source for this part of the book, it is called *Tarabel*. He adds that he is utterly unable to ascertain where the place was situated.

2 : 24. *Ulfius* is one of the knights whom Tennyson has adopted in the *Idylls*. “Ulfius and Brastias and Bedivere” seem to be a trio of Arthur’s earliest friends.

2 : 28. *Merlin*. Merlin, whose original was perhaps the Welsh bard *Myrrdhin*, is a prominent figure in Arthurian romance. Long after the time when the other knights were remembered and believed in, Merlin’s name was popular, becom-

ing at last a name for almanacs, as *Polonius* is attached in our time to a collection of "wise saws and modern instances." For a very thorough account of Merlin and of the Merlin literature early and late, see Professor Mead's introduction to the English prose *Merlin*, Early English Text Society, Original Series, vol. 112, London, 1899.

3 : 18. upon the Four Evangelists. The writers of the Gospels, *Matthew*, *Mark*, *Luke*, and *John*. Compare "on a book," Ch. 5. The custom of taking oath on the Bible has continued to our own day. In the days before printing, when Bibles were scarce, it may have been that the four Gospels was more generally available, or it may be that "the Four Evangelists" was regarded as more binding, as being more specific. A few lines are omitted after this sentence.

4 : 16. Lot . . . Lothian, Orkney. Professor Rhys (*A. L.*, p. 11) regards Lot as the hero from whom Lothian, or Lou-donesia (as Geoffrey gives it), received its name. He identifies him, however, with the Welsh Llud, and thinks that from being originally a Celtic Zeus he has become a god of the sea. This would account for the island kingdom of Orkney, of which he is king in our romance.

4 : 17. Margawse. Except here, this name is spelled *Mor-gawse*. In the metrical romance *Arthour and Merlin*, it is said that Lot married Belisant (Paton, *Fairy Mythology*, p. 138), from which name Tennyson doubtless gets his *Bellcent*.

4 : 18. Nentres, Garlot, Elaine. Malory, following various versions of the old romances, sometimes introduces (as did they) as separate characters persons who may be traced to one original hero or heroine. Professor Rhys thinks that Nentres and Uriens were originally one. Garlot he identifies with the old Welsh country of Gwaelawt (*A. L.*, p. 323). Malory has four Elaines (as well as an Eleine): King Nentres' wife, mentioned here; King Ban's wife, who is not found in our selections; Elaine, the daughter of Pelles and mother of Galahad, and Elaine the fair of Astolat.

4 : 20. Morgan le Fay. This name, according to Professor Rhys, would be more correctly written *Morgen*, which means *sea-born*. She is the lady who has charge of the healing of Arthur's wounds, when he is carried to Avalon. "Apart from those scenes in which Morgain tends the king's wounds," says Miss Paton, "her hatred of him is persistent, and is the ruling

motive of her career, wherever it touches his."—*Fairy Mythology*, p. 13. For an advanced study of Morgan, as well as of the Lady of the Lake and other fairies of the Arthurian romances, see "Studies in the Fairy Mythology of Arthurian Romance" by Lucy A. Paton, *Radcliffe College Monographs*, No. 13.

4 : 22. **Gore.** Professor Rhys thinks that Gore was the peninsula of Gwyry, now Gower (*A. L.*, p. 329).

5 : 2. **Ector.** "He is called 'Auctor' in the Huth 'Merlin'; 'Antor' in the ordinary 'Merlin'."—SOMMER, *Malory*, II, p. 159 n. 2. From the latter name Tennyson doubtless derives his Anton (*C. of A.*, l. 72).

6 : 2. **host of the North.** In Geoffrey of Monmouth, Uther's enemies are Saxons.

6 : 19. **forfeiture of my blessing.** Though this is said "in hearing of them all," it does not seem to have attracted any attention, nor does Merlin's phrase, "your son Arthur." Compare note on "Merlin is more to blame," Ch. 21.

7 : 1. **Archbishop of Canterbury.** Geoffrey of Monmouth (Book IX, Ch. 1) says that Arthur was crowned by Dubricius, Archbishop of the City of Legions (Caerleon).

7 : 4. **upon pain of cursing.** A common penalty. In Book XXI, we have Mordred cursed with "book and bell and candle."

7 : 6. **show some miracle.** The age of Arthurian romance believed fervently in miracles. The saints' lives of the Middle Ages are full of the miraculous.

7 : 12. **Paul's.** "Of course St. Paul's Cathedral did not exist in the days of King Arthur."—SOMMER, *Malory*, II, p. 177 n. 3.

7 : 27. **scripture.** The word has here its original sense of writing. We call our Bible "the writings," when we use this word, as we call it "the book," when we say "the Bible."

8 : 21. **Sir Arthur.** Malory may use "Sir" here because Arthur is not yet king, but it is probably an inadvertence.

8 : 30. **king of this land.** This tentative claim of Kay's is very much in keeping with what we have told of him later, though generally he is guilty of rudeness rather than of deceit. He is an "ungentle knight of the court," as Gareth calls him. Kay is interesting, however, as one of the earliest characters to be associated with Arthur and one who is nearly always

found as his *seneschal*, or steward. In the ancient Welsh tale of *Kilhwch and Olwen*, it is said that "Kai had this peculiarity, that his breath lasted nine nights and nine days under water, and he could exist nine nights and nine days without sleep. A wound from Kai's sword no physician could heal. Very subtle was Kai. When it pleased him, he could render himself as tall as the highest tree in the forest. And he had another peculiarity, — so great was the heat of his nature, that, when it rained hardest, whatever he carried remained dry for a handbreadth above and a handbreadth below his hand; and when his companions were coldest, it was to them as fuel to light their fire."

10 : 11. *seneschal*. Steward.

10 : 16. *Twelfth-day*. The twelfth day after Christmas, January 6. Candlemas, mentioned just below, is the Feast of the Purification of the Virgin, and is celebrated on February 2. It is the well-known "Ground-hog Day," when the ground-hog (sometimes a bear), after his long hibernation, sallies forth to see if spring has come.

11 : 2. *let purvey*. For this use of *let*, see Baldwin, § 271.

11 : 5. *Britain*. Britain probably refers to Brittany, which was once called Lesser or Little Britain. The fact that it is mentioned at all suggests that the knight was from another country, and the scene is now laid in Great Britain. *Brastias*. See note on "Ulfius," Ch. 1.

11 : 8. *Pentecost*. Pentecost is celebrated on the seventh Sunday after Easter, and may therefore come as early as May 10 or as late as June 13. It is very frequently the festival distinguished by adventures, and Professor Mead (*Selections*, p. 250) notes interestingly: "The season of Pentecost was a favorite time for feasts in the Middle Ages, as abundant opportunity was then afforded for outdoor sports."

11 : 11. *the commons*. A knight of the fifteenth century does not propose to establish a king without the voice of the commons. The society of the *Morte Darthur* does not include the humbler classes. Sometimes they are mentioned, but in general we know of their existence only from the silent testimony that some one must till the fields.

11 : 20. *coronation made*. Tennyson has greatly enlarged Malory's account (*C. of A.*, ll. 41-45, 253-308).

11 : 25. *ought to do*. *Ought* has here the earlier sense of

the past tense of the verb *to owe*, the meaning being "as they owed it to do."

12 : 9. Arthur won all the north. Geoffrey of Monmouth says that Denmark and Norway were subdued by Arthur, who then proceeded to conquer Gaul and Rome. In Book V of the *Morte Darthur*, Arthur conquers Rome, and is crowned Emperor, doubtless as the successor of Charlemagne, though he must have antedated that worthy by over three centuries.

12 : 10. Wales, a part of it. This would be mystifying indeed, since Arthur was a British king, if we could not attribute it to a time when the Angevin kings were finding it difficult to subdue Wales.

12 : 13. Round Table. This order is not yet established. See Book III, Ch. 1.

12 : 16. Carlion. *Cacr Lleon*, the City of Legions. "This is Caerleon-upon-Usk, the Roman Isca Silurum." — SOMMER, *Malory*, II, p. 158 n. 1.

12 : 24. King with the Hundred Knights. By this distinguished title he is usually known. In Book X, Ch. 60, his name is given as Berrant le Apres.

12 : 26. king of Carados. In Ch. 12 and elsewhere we have a King Carados, so that the "of" here is probably a slip. In Book VII, Ch. 26, is a Sir Carados of the Dolorous Tower. King Carados is perhaps the Sir Craddocke of the English ballad of "The Boy and the Mantle." See note on "Cradok's mantle" in Caxton's Preface.

13 : 6. no joy to receive no gifts. The double negative of Middle and Old English is familiar to all readers of Chaucer. Cf.

"He n̄evere yet no vileinye ne sayde
In al his lyf, unto no maner wight." — *Prolog*, ll. 70-71.

13 : 27. who saith nay. No matter who attempts to prevent.

13 : 30. than I will now rehearse. See note on "won all the north," Ch. 7.

14 : 1. called him a witch. Witch was originally either masculine or feminine.

15 : 2. sword that ye had by miracle. Note that this sword is called Excalibur below, although it is not Excalibur,

since Arthur had not yet received it. See the account of his getting Excalibur, in Ch. 25.

15 : 8. **great joy of his deeds and hardiness.** As this includes his enemies, it is evidently the sportsman's delight in something well done.

15. **Chapters 10 to 17.** The omitted chapters tell how Merlin advised Arthur to send after King Ban of Benwick and King Bors of Gaul to aid him against his enemies, promising to aid them in return against King Claudas, an enemy of theirs. They come into England with a great host, and assist Arthur against eleven kings who have sworn to destroy him. The battle is finally brought to an end by the advice of Merlin, who then goes into Northumberland to see his master Bleise, and we come to the rescue of Leodegrance.

16 : 1. **Leodegrance.** We all remember Tennyson's

"Leodegran, the king of Cameliard,
Had one fair daughter, and none other child;
And she was fairest of all flesh on earth,
Guinevere, and in her his one delight." — *C. of A.*, ll. 1-4.

Cameliard is supposed to be Scotland.

16 : 7. **ever after he loved her.** This meeting, when Guenevere apparently does not particularly notice Arthur, is described in *C. of A.*, ll. 47 ff.

16 : 15. **wage good knights.** We shall so wage war as to prove ourselves good knights.

16 : 25. **Balin . . . and Balan.** Book II is devoted to the adventures of Balin and his brother Balan. The story has appealed to two modern poets of the Arthur story. Tennyson's *Balin and Balan* was the last of the *Idylls* in date of composition. In *The Tale of Balen*, the late Mr. Swinburne has given us a sympathetic account of misfortunes which seem to have been decreed in advance and which the brothers were powerless to avert.

16 : 33. **Saracens.** This term means *heathen*, and not necessarily Turks.

17 : 10. **Naunes in Britain.** Nantes, which was for a time the capital of Brittany.

17 : 21. **Nero.** In Book II, Ch. 9, he is said to be King Rience's brother.

17 : 25. Bedegraine. The battle in which Arthur, Ban, and Bors had shown themselves superior to the eleven kings allied against them.

18 : 4. Gawaine, Gaheris, Agravaine, and Gareth. These four and Mordred, their half brother, are the sons of Arthur's sister, the wife of Lot of Orkney. Gawaine is one of the best known of Arthur's knights. He was originally the beau-ideal of chivalry, to a greater degree even than Launcelot in the later romances. Professor Schofield says of him: "Nowhere does the irreligious Gawain appear in English literature before the time of Malory. In all sources that present the original saga in its purity, the respect for him is universal, unfeigned, and justified. He was the beloved of all, the envied of none." — *English Literature*, pp. 214–215. Miss Weston points out that, "Malory, who drew from various sources, and represents a late stage in the evolution of the legend, is remarkably inconsistent in his treatment of Gawain: the earlier and later conceptions strive together in his version, and he makes statements utterly at variance the one with the other. Thus in Book VII, Ch. 34, we find Gareth refusing to have anything to do with his brother Gawain on the ground that he is *treacherous, vengeable, a murderer of good knights, and a hater of all knights of the Round Table*; while in Book XIII, Ch. 16, Gawain and Gareth ride forth together in search of the Grail, and in Book XX, Ch. 1, Gawain, Gareth, and Gaheris together refuse to countenance Modred and Agravaine in their betrayal of Launcelot and Guinevere to King Arthur." — P. 9 of *The Legend of Gawain* by Jessie L. Weston, a book which gives a complete and systematic account of the place of Gawain in the Arthurian cycle.

Gareth, the youngest son of Lot and Morgawse, is the hero of Book VII. Gaheris and Agravaine appear frequently, but except as Arthur's nephews are not really important.

18 : 7. his mother's side, Igraine. Apparently, then, Morgawse was the daughter of Igraine and Gorlois. The grammatical construction here is usual in Malory. See Baldwin, § 22 c.

18 : 14. him thought. It seemed to him. An impersonal construction. In Anglo Saxon, *thencan*, to think, and *thyncan*, to seem, were distinct verbs. Later they became confused, and now the impersonal verb "it thought to

him" is obsolete, though we are still familiar with the form *methinks*, and still use the form "it seemed to him."

19 : 16. Palamides followed it. The Questing Beast, truly a most peculiar monster, seems to have endured for generations, and always to have occupied the attention of some knight destined to pursue it. Palamides is a very familiar figure in the story of Tristram. He appears first as a rival of Tristram's for the love of La Belle Isoud. He is at first a "Saracen" or heathen, but in Book XII we have the account of his christening.

20 : 3. Merlin like a child. Since Merlin presently explains to Arthur that this appearance was himself, it is not clear why he assumed the disguise. Merlin has a name for doing prankish things. This may have been one of them, or more probably it may have been simply a proof that he was super-human.

21 : 1. put in the earth quick. In Book IV, Ch. 1, we have the end of Merlin described. The account differs from Tennyson's very materially in that Malory's Nimue is not, like Tennyson's Vivien, an enemy of Merlin's working to ensnare and destroy him. The story of Merlin is told by Iseult of Brittany to her children in Matthew Arnold's poem of *Tristram and Iseult*. It has thus a prominent place in Victorian poetry. Malory's account is as follows: —

"So after these quests of Sir Gawaine, Sir Tor, and King Pellinore, it fell so that Merlin fell in a dotation on the damosel that King Pellinore brought to court, and she was one of the damosels of the lake, that hight Nimue. But Merlin would let her have no rest, but always he would be with her. And ever she made Merlin good cheer till she had learned of him all manner thing that she desired; and he was assotted upon her, that he might not be from her. So on a time he told King Arthur that he should not dure long, but for all his crafts he should be put in the earth quick. And so he told the king many things that should befall, but always he warned the king to keep well his sword and the scabbard, for he told him how the sword and the scabbard should be stolen by a woman from him that he most trusted. Also he told King Arthur that he should miss him, — Yet had ye liefer than all your lands to have me again. Ah, said the king, since ye know of your adventure, purvey for it, and put away by your crafts that misadventure. Nay, said Merlin, it will not be; so he departed from the king. And within a while the Damosel of the Lake departed, and Merlin went with her ever-

more wheresoever she went. And ofttimes Merlin would have had her privily away by his subtle crafts; then she made him to swear that he should never do none enchantment upon her if he would have his will. And so he sware: so she and Merlin went over the sea unto the land of Benwick, whereas King Ban was king that had great war against King Claudas, and there Merlin spake with King Ban's wife, a fair lady and a good, and her name was Elaine, and there he saw young Launcelot. There the queen made great sorrow for the mortal war that King Claudas made on her lord and on her lands. Take none heaviness, said Merlin, for this same child within this twenty year shall revenge you on King Claudas, that all Christendom shall speak of it; and this same child shall be the most man of worship of the world, and his first name is Galahad, that know I well, said Merlin, and since ye have confirmed him, Launcelot. That is truth, said the queen, his first name was Galahad. O Merlin, said the queen, shall I live to see my son such a man of prowess? Yea, lady, on my peril ye shall see it, and live many winters after.

"And so, soon after, the lady and Merlin departed, and by the way Merlin showed her many wonders, and came into Cornwall. . . . And she was ever passing weary of him, and fain would have been delivered of him, for she was afeard of him because he was a devil's son, and she could not beskift him by no mean. And so on a time it happed that Merlin showed to her in a rock whereas was a great wonder, and wrought by enchantment, that went under a great stone. So by her subtle working she made Merlin to go under that stone to let her wit of the marvels there; but she wrought so there for him that he came never out for all the craft he could do. And so she departed and left Merlin."

The following incident from Ch. 5 of the same book (IV) is the only other reference to Merlin's end — we can hardly call it his *death* :—

"So, as Sir Bagdemagus rode to see many adventures, it happed him to come to the rock whereas the Lady of the Lake had put Merlin under the stone, and there he heard him make great dole; whereof Sir Bagdemagus would have holpen him, and went unto the great stone, and it was so heavy that an hundred men might not lift it up. When Merlin wist he was there, he bade leave his labour, for all was in vain, for he might never be holpen but by her that put him there. And so Bagdemagus departed and did many adventures, and proved after a full good knight, and came again to the court and was made knight of the Round Table. So on the morn there fell new tidings and other adventures."

21 : 17. *here is my glove.* This custom in challenging is well known. He who undertakes to defend Igraine must take up Ulfius' glove, and thus accept his challenge to single combat. Winning, Igraine will be held acquitted; but if the challenger wins, her crime is established. In the same way Sir Mador accuses Guinevere (Book XVIII), and Launcelot discharges her. See note on Book XVIII, Chs. 1-8.

22 : 16. *Merlin is more to blame than ye.* This is because Merlin, and apparently Merlin only, knows the complete story of Arthur's birth.

22 : 24. *eight days.* A brief paragraph is omitted from the close of this chapter, as it concerns Ch. 22.

22. Chapters 22 to 24. The omitted chapters tell how Griflet was made a knight, how Arthur fought with a knight and was saved by Merlin, and how Merlin told him that the knight's name was Pellinore, and that he should have two sons who "save one shall have no fellow of prowess and of good living, and their names shall be Percivale of Wales and Lamerake of Wales." The one exception is Galahad, the Grail knight; for though Launcelot is hardly equalled in prowess, he is not foremost in "good living," as he himself recognizes. See Book XIII, Ch. 2. With this we come to Ch. 25.

23 : 2. *ride and go.* *Go* here has the meaning of *walk*, a meaning which it retained in Shakspere's time. Compare *Midsummer Night's Dream*, III, 2, 444:—

"I can no further crawl, no further go."

23 : 11. *Lady of the Lake.* This lady is in Malory a somewhat confusing personage. Professor Rhys remarks that "Malory gives, so to say, widely differing views. Accordingly one Lady of the Lake sends Arthur the sword Excalibur, and asks for Balyn's head in return for it (Book II, Ch. 3); another Lady of the Lake confines Merlin in his stone prison (Book IV, Ch. 1); a third, Nyneve, busies herself about Arthur's safety (IX, 16), and a fourth about that of Lancelot (XIX, 11). They may all be taken as different aspects of the one mythic figure, the lady Morgen." It should be noted that Professor Rhys means that historically they are one, since in Malory Morgen is a different person. Miss Paton suggests an explana-

tion of this (*Fairy Mythology*, pp. 202-203): "We may unhesitatingly classify the Dame du Lac as a true Celtic fay. . . . A vague personality at first, merely the lady who nurtured Lancelot and dwelt in the fairyland beneath the waves, undoubtedly because her fosterling attained popularity as a hero, she came to be regarded as the type of a divine protectress, and as a preëminently gentle and beneficent being." The last attribute cannot always be applied to Nimue or Ninian, or Vivian, as she is variously called. Miss Weston notes (*Legend of Sir Gawain*, p. 54 n.), "At first a sympathetic and attractive personality, she gradually undergoes a change for the worse, developing finally into the repulsive Vivien of the *Idylls*." We have traced thus the literary development of one person — Morgan — into three different persons, with at least three different personalities.

23 : 24. when I see my time. In Book II, Ch. 3, the Lady of the Lake appears at Arthur's court, and asks him for the head of a knight (Balin) who has just won a sword by his ability to pull it from its scabbard. Balin — who says that his mother had been killed by the sorcery of this lady — answers her request by beheading her, and is thereupon commanded by Arthur to leave the court.

23 : 27. took it with him. The name of the sword is not given here, but when the Lady of the Lake reappears (as told in the preceding note), Arthur asks her its name, and she replies, "Excalibur, that is as much to say as Cut-steel." This, then, is Arthur's famous sword. Geoffrey of Monmouth, after mentioning Arthur's shield "named Priwen," says: "Girt was he also with Caliburnus, best of swords, that was forged within the Isle of Avalon; and the lance that did grace his right hand was called by the name Ron."

23 : 32. Sir Pellinore. Arthur's fight with Pellinore is described in Ch. 23. See note on Chs. 22 to 24.

24 : 31. as other poor knights did. Compare Tennyson, *C. of A.*, l. 51:—

"But rode a simple knight among his knights."

24. Chapters 26 and 27. Chapter 26 tells how King Rience sent an insolent message demanding Arthur's beard to trim his mantle, and how Arthur defied him. In Ch. 27, Arthur,

having been told by Merlin that he that should destroy him should be born on May-day, commands that all children of lords and ladies born on that day shall be put to death. Mordred, however, who is to prove a traitor, escapes. This incident, so manifestly borrowed from the history of Herod, is entirely out of keeping with Arthur's nature, and needs no place in these selections.

BOOK II

Balin and Balan are "two brethren born in Northumberland, good knights." Their adventures, particularly those of Balin, are a steady progress toward catastrophe, which is reached when, not having recognized each other, they fight together until each mortally wounds the other. There is a note of fatalism in this interesting story. This tale is the source of Tennyson's idyll of *Balin and Balan* and of Swinburne's *The Tale of Balen*.

BOOK III

25 : 1. In the beginning. This phrase is used to resume the story of Arthur's coming to the throne and of the early years of his reign. Book II has been in the nature of a digression.

25 : 5. for that cause. That is, since he was not thought to have the rights of an heir, it was easier to make war on him.

25 : 15. Table Round. The Round Table was first mentioned by Wace, in the *Roman de Brut*. Layamon, the author of the English *Brut*, says that it was made to avoid disputes about place, that it could seat "1600 and more," and yet that Arthur could take it with him whenever he rode out (A. C. L. Brown, *Harvard Studies and Notes*, Vol. VII, pp. 183-209). Dr. Brown adds that this seems to be due to some Celtic tradition of quarrels about precedence. In Book XIV, Ch. 2, Malory says that Merlin made the Round Table "in tokening of the world, for by the Round Table is the world signified by right."

26 : 1. like you. *Like* in this place is not our word but the

old impersonal use, meaning *be pleasing to*. *You* is in the dative case.

26 : 6. that Launcelot should love her. That is, Merlin's suggestion that he could find "a damosel of beauty and fairness" is a warning; the expression does not mean that Merlin mentioned Launcelot.

26 : 7. **adventures of the Sangreal.** For the quest of the Holy Grail, see Books XIII–XVII. We may suppose that Merlin's tale was in the nature of a prophecy, and that his turning to it here is mentioned to show that he said nothing further about Arthur's marriage.

26 : 14. **wed my daughter.** Malory's Leodegrance shows none of the hesitation which Tennyson's Leodegran exhibits. A large part of the *Coming of Arthur* is occupied with the resolving of Leodegran's doubts about Arthur's kingship. As a study in the poetic retelling of the story, it should be noticed that this doubt of Leodegran affords an opportunity for telling the story of Arthur's birth in a much briefer form than it is told in Malory.

26 : 25. **London.** London is seldom a capital of Arthur. Perhaps the marriage of Arthur suggested it, for once again (Book XXI, Ch. 1) we find Guinevere going to London on the excuse of buying "all manner of things that longed unto the wedding."

27 : 3. **I have loved her long.** See Book I, Ch. 18, "and there had Arthur the first sight of Guenevere, the king's daughter of Cameliard, and ever after he loved her."

27 : 20. **two sieges were void.** There is apparently a mistake here, for Leodegran lacked fifty knights, and Merlin had been able to find only twenty-eight. Perhaps this number should have been forty-eight; if not, Malory has simply overlooked the fact that he has left twenty-two seats unaccounted for. The statement that two sieges are void is repeated in Ch. 4, and Merlin says, "There shall no man sit in those places but they that shall be of most worship." One of these seats is of course the Siege Perilous, which Galahad later occupies.

27 : 29. **with great solemnity.** This sentence, the first of Ch. 5, completes Malory's description of Arthur's wedding. The intervening chapters tell of an adventure that began at that time. Tennyson has enlarged this account, and added a fine hymn, sung by Arthur's knighthood.

BOOKS III, IV, V, AND VI

Book III, after dealing with Arthur's marriage and the ordering of his kingdom, relates the several adventures of Gawaine, Tor, and Pellinore in pursuit of a white hart which had entered Arthur's hall at his wedding feast.

Book IV tells of the end of Merlin. It then details the attempts of Morgan le Fay and Accolon of Gaul to destroy Arthur, and the successful efforts of the Lady of the Lake in his behalf. Three series of adventures are next related—those of Gawain, Marhaus, and Uwaine. The adventures of Gawain include the story of Pelleas and Ettard, the source of Tennyson's idyll, *Pelleas and Ettarre*.

Book V is perhaps the least picturesque and interesting in Malory. Arthur refuses to pay truage to Rome, and thus begins a war which ends with Arthur's coronation as Emperor at Rome itself.

Book VI is really the Book of Launcelot. It describes his adventures, but as almost every chapter brings a new adventure, it is well-nigh impossible to summarize the book.

BOOK VII

28 : 4. Kynke Kenadonne. The name of this castle occurs only here and in Ch. 34. I have been unable to locate or identify it.

28 : 8. a great marvel. This custom is mentioned frequently. See Kay's reference to it in Book XIII, Ch. 2. Pentecost has already been noticed as a popular season for feasts (Book I, Ch. 7). Arthur was crowned at Pentecost, and at Pentecost the adventures of the Holy Grail began.

28 : 22. Round Table fully accomplished. See note, Book III, Ch. 1.

30 : 18. of great worship. The term *worship*, occurring frequently, deserves attention. We have here very nearly the original meaning of *worth-ship*. Later, worship comes to mean the adoration accorded one of worthship, its present meaning. In Malory we may take it as nearly synonymous with *worth* or *worthiness*.

30 : 22. La Cote Male Taile. The story of La Cote Male

Taile, found in Book IX, Chs. 1-9, presents several points of similarity to the story of Beaumains. The reference here is to Kay's dubbing Brewnor "La Cote Male Taile, that is as much as to say, the evil-shapen coat." Sir Brewnor proves to be a very good knight, and evidently Launcelot thinks that the memory of this should be a check to Kay's fondness for nicknames.

31 : 8. and so did Sir Gawaine. See note on "Gawaine," Book I, Ch. 19. Were we accustomed to the conception of Gawaine in the earlier romances, we should think it no more noteworthy to find him courteous than to find Launcelot so.

31 : 24. Whitsuntide. Whitsunday, the seventh after Easter, is identical with Pentecost.

31 : 25. most royallest. This is not only a double superlative; it exhibits a peculiar form. Notice *perilloust* below, which developed by the present rule would be *perilousest*. See Baldwin, §§ 36, 42.

33 : 11. the dwarf come. Malory says "the dwarf," as though he had mentioned him before. It is possible that his source, which has not been discovered, had mentioned him.

36 : 4. knight that thou killest. The phrase "allow thee" means "give credit to thee as superior." The damsel continually insists that Gareth's victories are due to "unhappiness," *i.e. mischance*.

37 : 15. ashamed at her words. From the fact that the knight himself sits at the table which he provides for Gareth, the meaning must be that he is ashamed that the damsel should revile so good a knight.

37 : 23. the passage. This passage is referred to in Ch. 24 as "a passage of the water of Mortaise."

38 : 32. a black laund. In just what way this plain was black we do not know, unless indeed we are to imagine black grass and trees as well as a black hawthorn. As we shall have occasion to note, this is the Book of Colors, and we must expect colors contrary to nature.

39 : 17. unhappy knave. *Unhappy* and *unhappily* are continually used in this book in the sense of *misfortunate*, and by *mischance*. *Knave* has more of the old sense of *boy* (cf. German *Knabe*) than of the present sense of *villain*.

41 : 9. other. For the uses of this word in Malory, see Baldwin, §§ 49, 125-127, 132 d.

41 : 21. Sir Percard. This green knight suggests the charming story of Sir Gawaine and the Green Knight, which has come down to us in an English alliterative poem of the last half of the fourteenth century. It is available for the modern reader in Miss Weston's graceful prose rendering.

43 : 6. my damosel. Gareth here implies no propriety, using the term *my* in reference to the fact that he is at present engaged in the adventure of the damosel who accompanies him. This is in accord with the custom of the knight-errant, who is ready to take the part of a lady in need of a champion. Compare Ch. 25 of Book XVIII: ". . . for there was never worshipful woman but they loved one better than another; and worship in arms may never be foiled, but first reserve the honor to God, and secondly the quarrel must come of thy lady; and such love I call virtuous love."

44 : 14. to keep him from all treason. This might mean to keep him from treason against his host; but from the next chapter, in which the Red Knight sets "threescore knights to watch Beaumains that he should have no shame nor villany," it is clear that it refers to any possible treachery against Beaumains himself. Probably the intention was simply to show him all possible honor.

44 : 31. as wight as ever was Wade. According to the Wilkina saga, a collection of mediæval Norwegian legends relating to Dietrich of Bern and others, Wade is the son of Wilcinus and Wachild, a mermaid. Compare with Malory the Middle English alliterative poem *Morte Arthure*, ll. 964-965: —

"Ware thou wyghttere than Wade or Wawayn owthire
Thou wynnys no wyrechipe, I warne thee before;"

44 : 32. Launcelot, Tristram, or . . . Lamorak. Launcelot and Tristram are always first in might, and with them, especially in the accounts of the adventures of Tristram, is frequently associated Lamorak de Galis.

44 : 33. Pass Perilous. The terms *perilous*, *dangerous*, *terrible*, etc., frequently applied to castles are hardly complete proper names. These castles can rarely be identified, and should we find a Pass Perilous elsewhere, the name is so general that we should probably find no proof of its identity with this Pass Perilous.

45 : 14. knight-errant. The term means *wandering knight*. Miss Bates (*Idylls*, p. 206) quotes Miss Weston's translation of *The Lay of Tyolet* (pp. 57-58): "For then the best and bravest knights were wont to wander through the land seeking adventures by day and by night, with never a squire for company, and it might well be that in the day's journey they found neither house nor tower, or again perchance they would find two or three such. Or by dusky night they might find fair adventures, the which they would tell again at court, even as they had befallen. And the clerks of the court would write them fairly on parchment in the Latin tongue, so that in days to come, men, as they would might hearken to them."

48 : 10. colour of Inde. The color of Inde was blue, and Sir Persant of Inde seems to have had no other connection with India than the wearing of this color.

48 : 22. blow such a boast. Compare Tennyson, *G. and L.*, l. 1198:—

"Why laugh ye? that ye blew your boast in vain?"

48 : 26. Sir, I marvel. At last, after his long endurance of her reproaches, Beaumains is to find his travelling companion more agreeable and more just. Compare this rather sudden change of front with Tennyson's more gradual approach.

49 : 26. known another day. No doubt the narrator intended to offer a more detailed account than this, but he has not done so. Tennyson has given a more elaborate explanation, but a different one.

50 : 7. I take no force. This phrase is very common. Its meaning is, "It makes no difference to me," or in a colloquialism of to-day, "It's immaterial to me."

50 : 19. forhewen. The prefix *for* has the old intensive force, giving the idea of *hewed to pieces*. Compare the German *ver*; for example, *brennen*, to burn, and *verbrennen*, to burn up; *essen*, eat, and *veressen* (also *fressen*), devour.

51 : 5. at the black thorn. Gareth's adventures have now occupied some time, and either the noise of his exploits has preceded him, or a special messenger has brought the tidings to Persant.

51 : 9. Perimones. We have now the full quartet of Per's — Percard, Pertolepe, Perimones, Persant. The names Per-

tolepe and Persant occur again, but they are mentioned only, so that we may regard the knights as peculiar to this book. The similarity of the names suggests that they were coined by Malory or by his predecessor for this particular tale, and Dr. Sommer's testimony (*Malory*, III, p. 9) that in none of the versions which he has read, and which are represented in Malory's work, "is any, even the slightest reference made to . . . the five brothers whom Gareth overcame and sent to Arthur's court" strengthens this conjecture. Dr. Sommer makes a slight error in speaking of the *five* brothers, since it is nowhere stated that Ironside is a brother of the other four, and in Ch. 23 Malory speaks of "these three [Percard is dead] brethiren," and in Ch. 29 Sir Ironside himself says, "and this is he that won Sir Persant of Inde and his three brethren." This is of small moment, but it shows that Ironside is differentiated a little more from the others than are they from each other.

51 : 20. **Castle Dangerous.** See note on "Pass Perilous," Ch. 9.

52 : 3. **Linet.** The names Linet — or Lynet, as Caxton spells it — and Lionesse are among those which Dr. Sommer says are not to be found in any of Malory's sources as he has traced them. The name Lynet bears some resemblance to the Luned of the *Mabinogion* story of *The Lady of the Fountain*, and their stories have some points in common, but there is no very close resemblance.

52 : 28. **the three above said.** The knights mentioned here are all familiar to the readers of Malory. It is probable that Malory introduces names in catalogues without regard to his source for the particular story. He has certainly a long roll of knights who appear at some of the tournaments. See for this Chs. 26-27.

53 : 6. **Morgawse.** This is the spelling of the name except in Book I, Ch. 2. For note on "Morgawse," see this passage.

53 : 17. **as at this time.** This redundant use of *as* occurs frequently.

53 : 25. **Gherard . . . Arnold le Breuse.** Two more names found in Malory only in Book VII, though there is a Sir Gerard in Book V.

57 : 21. **seven men's strength.** The Red Knight is, then, a solar hero; that is, his strength increases with the rising of the sun toward its zenith, and wanes with the declining sun.

Gawaine was also a solar hero, though the peculiarity is not frequently mentioned. In Book XX, Ch. 21, it is said that "Sir Gawaine had such a grace and gift that a holy man had given to him, that every day in the year, from underne till high noon, his might increased those three hours as much as thrice his strength, and that caused Sir Gawaine to win great honour. And for his sake King Arthur made an ordinance that all manner of battles for any quarrels that should be done afore King Arthur should begin at underne; . . . but there were but few knights that time living that knew this advantage that Sir Gawaine had, but King Arthur all only."

58 : 26. or else to die. For this infinitive construction, see Baldwin, § 238.

61 : 3. jolly. The word has here more a physical sense than a reference to his spirits. It conveys the idea of feeling well, formerly a regular meaning of the word.

62 : 12. seven men's strength. The solar peculiarity has not been noticed during the battle, but the writer refers to it again at its close.

64 : 14. Lionesse. Dame Lionesse, who is Lyonors in Tennyson's *Gareth and Lynette* (cf. *Lionors*, Book I, Ch. 17), occurs only in this book of Malory. She seems to have some of the characteristics of a fay, and lives near the Isle of Avilion, which is certainly in the Celtic otherworld, and in the country of Lionesse, a land reputed to have sunk beneath the waves. Professor Rhys (*A. L.*, p. 62) locates this sunken land somewhere between Lundy and the Isles of Scilly.

64 : 16. the worthy knights. Dame Lionesse may have borrowed her expression from the idea of the nine worthies (see Caxton's Preface, and note), but she probably means here only that Gareth should continue on in his feats of arms until his name should become known.

65 : 22. Sir Gringamore. Gringamore, like his two sisters, is found in Malory only in this book, and like them is not, Dr. Sommer says, to be found in any of Malory's known sources. A *Guingamor*, however, is well known in Breton literature. Dr. Schofield (*Lays of Graalent and Lanral*, p. 142 n. 2) suggests a comparison with Malory's Gringamore, and Miss Paton (*Fairy Mythology*, p. 70) notes a resemblance: "Moreover, Sir Gringamore also appears as an otherworld character in the seventh book of Malory, where as in *Erec* he is said to dwell

in the Isle of Avilion, and is provided with two fairy sisters, Linet and Dame Liones."

66 : 5. *other*. *Other* here has one of its older meanings of *second* or *following*.

66 : 22. *woodness*. The indignation which seizes Beaumains on the capture of his dwarf.

67 : 4. *one of the periloust knights*. Additional proof that Gringamore was a well-known knight. One is tempted to ask, since he is so good a knight, and since he is so ready to defy Beaumains in his sister's behalf, why did not he deliver his sister from the Red Knight of the Red Laundes? But such a question would be an impertinence in connection with this old romance, which needed first an adventure for Beaumains, and later a knight to aid Lionesse, and so — provided both.

69 : 5. *so fair as she was*. Of the Empress in the *Mabinogi* of *Peredur* Miss Paton notes: "She can change her appearance at will, and like Gareth's fairy mistress, now in one guise and now in another even more beautiful, she affords the same hero the sensation of falling in love with her twice." — *Fairy Mythology*, p. 155.

70 : 22. *Ye were come*. Chapter XXII and part of Ch. XXIII are omitted.

70 : 25. *next feast of Pentecost*. Gareth has now been absent from court for a year.

71 : 15. *but my name is Sir Ironside*. Evidently the first "My name is" should be "I am called," or an equivalent expression.

72 : 4. *for the love of Sir Launcelot*. It will be remembered that Ironside had put to death many knights in order to harm Arthur's knighthood because a lady whom he loved had lost her brother at the hands (as she thought) of either Launcelot or Gawaine (Ch. 17). "For the love of," therefore, means really *for hate of*, and we must give it the general force of *on account of*.

73 : 5. *water of Mortaise*. See note on Book XIII, Ch. 13.

74 : 12. *done me to wit*. Caused me to know. For *do*, *gar*, and *let* as causatives, see Baldwin, §§ 266, 269, 271. 2.

75 : 9. *Sir*. Either this is a slip, or Arthur addresses Kay, commanding him in the future to abstain from using the name Beaumains.

76 : 8. aknowen where I am. That is, do not admit that you are in the secret of my whereabouts.

76 : 25. Assumption of our Lady. The Feast of the Assumption, commemorating the taking up into heaven of the Virgin Mary, is celebrated on the 15th of August.

76 : 31. Isle of Avilion. Famous as the place whither Arthur departs to be healed of his wounds. See note on Book XXI, Ch. 21. For comment on this mention, see Rhys, *A. L.*, pp. 361-362.

78 : 10. Palamides the Saracen. See note on Book I, Ch. 19.

79 : 12. Galahault the noble prince. This is not the Grail knight but the Galahad whom we meet in Book XVIII, Chs. 13, 22. He is the son of Sir Brewnor. With regard to the two Galahads, Professor Rhys notes: "Malory attempts to distinguish them as follows: Lancelot's son, the Grail knight, is oftenest called by him Galahad and Galahalt, and sometimes the epithet is added of *the haute prynce* (see XIII, 4 and XVII, 1). But as a rule this is reserved by him for Breunor's son whom he calls Galahaut or Galahalt and Galahad; he is described as lord of the country of Surluse. . . . Malory's pages, however, may almost be said to have a whole Galahad family figuring in them, as they speak of a Galihud and a Galyhodyn, together with 'many moo of syre Launcelot's blood.'"*A. L.*, pp. 166-167.

80 : 8. all manner of colours. As we have seen, Dame Lionesse has some of the characteristics of a fairy. Magic rings are not uncommon. Miss Paton mentions a ring by the aid of which the Dame d'Avalon perceived that Morgen used cosmetics to hide the appearance of age. Truly a less desirable ring than this of Dame Lionesse!

80 : 22. Chapters 28 to 34. These chapters, omitted to shorten the story, which begins to drag, may be summarized as follows: After a tournament of which very substantial details are given, Gareth is proclaimed victor. He, however, has ridden forth, and cannot be found. He lodges that night at the castle of the Duke de la Rowse, undertaking — according to the custom of the castle — if he meets the duke thereafter, to yield himself as his prisoner unless he can deliver himself by his sword. In the morning he rides forth, and in order to pass on his way is compelled to fight with Sir Bendelaine, whom he slays. His next adventure is to slay the Brown

Knight without Pity, and thus set free thirty ladies whom the Brown Knight has held prisoners. After this Gareth meets the Duke de la Rowse, in whose castle he had lodged, of course defeats him, and makes him promise to report to Arthur at the next feast. He fights next a knight whom he does not know, and after a long time Linet appears, and recognizing the knights as Gareth and Gawaine, stops their fighting. Linet goes for Arthur, who presently returns, — having been only two miles distant! — and after him Gareth's mother, Dame Lionesse, Sir Gringamore, Guenevere, and others. Gareth tells his love of Lionesse to Arthur, who thereupon makes provision for the wedding, appointing Michaelmas as the day and Kink Kenadonne by the seaside as the place.

80 : 23. Michaelmas. The feast of St. Michaelmas and All Angels, celebrated on the 29th of September.

It is interesting to note that at the close of the story we are brought back to the very place where Arthur was holding his court when the story opened. It is more interesting that this place is "Kink Kenadonne, upon the sands that marched nigh Wales," for in a way this castle belongs to this story.

81 : 1. at the device of King Arthur. It is a very happy ending to this pleasant story to find Arthur so well pleased with his new good knight and his bride that he makes the arrangements for the wedding, and entertains the guests.

81 : 7. Dame Laurel. The courtship of Gaheris and Linet must have been singularly rapid, but the story-teller has been anxious to have as many people as possible wed and live happily ever after. So Gaheris marries Linet, and Agravaine is provided with a wife, Dame Laurel, of whom we have no other mention. It will be remembered that Tennyson alters this ordering, and that Gareth weds Lynette. This is logical, for in his idyll Gareth knows practically nothing of Lyonors; but Malory sets out by making Gareth the champion of Lionesse, and he therefore very properly marries her. Moreover, we are given more than a passing glimpse of her in this book, and know that Gareth received full reward.

81 : 19. and it were better. This means either "if it were better," the *and* accompanying the subjunctive showing that it indicates a condition, or "and would that it were better."

81 : 25. Duke de la Rowse. See the summary of Chs. 28-34.

81 : 32. three hundred knights. In Ch. 23 it is said that Ironside reported to Arthur with five hundred knights.

82 : 8. Brown Knight without Pity. See the summary of Chs. 28-34. We have had black, red, green, and blue knights; Gareth himself fought at the tournament in yellow armor, though appearing — while he wore Lionesse's ring — to wear many different colors, and we close this Book of Colors with a brown knight.

BOOKS VIII, IX, AND X

Books VIII, IX, and X contain Malory's version of the story of Tristram de Liones and La Beale Isoud. Together the books form more than one-third of the volume of Malory. The version here reproduced is not the best of the Tristram stories. A finer as well as a briefer version is available in Miss Weston's charming translation of Gottfried von Strassburg, entitled *The Story of Tristan and Iseult*. The story, very interesting as a story, is made even more interesting as the source of Matthew Arnold's *Tristram and Iseult* and Swinburne's *Tristram of Lyonesse*.

BOOKS XI AND XII

The eleventh and twelfth books, like the sixth, deal principally with adventures of Launcelot. Launcelot comes to King Pelles' castle, called here Corbin, and by the enchantment of Dame Brisen becomes the father of Galahad, whose mother is Elaine, the daughter of Pelles. When Guenevere hears of this, she reproaches Launcelot so violently that he is driven mad, and continues mad for some time. Many knights go to seek Launcelot, among them Percivale and Ector. Launcelot at last comes to Corbin, where he is recognized by Elaine, and cured by the Holy Grail. He then takes up his residence at the Castle of Bliant, which he renames Joyous Isle, calling himself Le Chevalier Mal Fet. To Joyous Isle at length come Ector and Percivale, and Launcelot returns with them to Arthur's court, where he is received with joy. To Arthur at Camelot come also Sir Tristram, who during the two years and more of Launcelot's absence has "borne the renown

through all the realm of Logris," and Palamides, who is now christened. When the other knights go forth on the quest of the Holy Grail, Tristram returns to Joyous Gard, which seems to be regarded as his castle, and Palamides follows the Questing Beast, which is Malory's explanation of their not being among those who undertake the Grail quest.

BOOK XIII

84 : 1. Pentecost. Book XIII follows very naturally on Book XII, as at the end of that book all have gathered at Camelot for the feast of Pentecost. Like the adventures of Gareth, these adventures begin at Pentecost and are introduced by the arrival of a maiden at Arthur's court.

84 : 2. Camelot. This is the one of Arthur's capitals best known to readers of the *Idylls*. Sir Edward Strachey locates it at Camel, near South Cadbury, Somerset; he notes: "Camelot itself existed in the time of Malory and Caxton with its proper name, and with all the remains of an important town and fortress, and, doubtless, the traditions of Arthur which Leland found there, and which in great part at least remain to this day." — *Morte Darthur*, pp. xv–xvii. Dr. Maynadier says: "The best identification of romantic Camelot is with Cadbury Castle; and therefore its poetic fame may rest, like Arthur's, on historical foundation. Needless to say, however, the Camelot of literature is purely fictitious. The real Camelot, if at Cadbury, could never have been anything but a fort, and never a many-towered city with palaces and churches, and a river close by, down which Ladies of Shalott might float." — *Arthur of the English Poets*, pp. 183–184. Malory himself identifies Camelot with Winchester, the ancient capital of the West Saxon kings. See Book XVIII, Ch. 8.

84 : 11. King Pelles. King Pelles, the father of Elaine and grandfather of Galahad, plays an important part in Books XI and XII.

85 : 13. Bors and Sir Lionel. These brothers, spoken of here as "cousins" of Launcelot, are really his nephews. Bors is the more prominent; he is usually called Bors de Ganis, but he may be the Bors of Gaul of the first book. Chapters 6–17 of Book XVI are devoted chiefly to the adventures of Sir Bors in the quest of the Holy Grail.

85 : 20. Galahad. Galahad, the hero of the later Grail romance, is the son of Launcelot and Elaine, King Pelles' daughter. Professor Rhys (*A. L.*, p. 13) derives his name from an early Welsh hero, Gwalchaved, a brother of Gwalchmai (Gawaine), but Professor Skeat gives the earlier name as *Galaad* (*Joseph of Arimathie*, p. 231), and Miss Jewett notes as follows: "The name Galahad is thought to be derived from *Numbers 26 : 29*, and other passages, where the name, which in the English versions is Gilead, is in the Latin Vulgate, *Galaad*." — *The Holy Grail*, p. 100.

86 : 16. Siege Perilous. In Book III, Ch. 4, Merlin says: "But in the Siege Perilous there shall no man sit therein but one, and if there be any so hardy to do it, he shall be destroyed, and he that shall sit there shall have no fellow."

86 : 25. four hundred . . . year. If we add to this number thirty-three, probably reckoned by the writer as the year of the Crucifixion of Our Lord, we have 483 as the date of the beginning of the Quest. The date usually given for Arthur's victory at Badon Hill, which must have been near the beginning of his rule, is 520, so that the dates cannot be reconciled. There is, of course, no historical significance in the date given here.

87 : 7. seen some adventure. For this custom, see Book VII, Ch. 1.

87 : 23. best knight of the world. With this account of the proving of the Grail knight compare the testing of the king in Book I, Ch. 5.

87 : 33. adventures . . . begin. It does not appear how Launcelot knows this, though a hermit had prophesied that he who should sit in the Siege Perilous should "win the Sangreal" (Book XI, Ch. 1).

88 : 8. touch you so sore. This prophecy is fulfilled, Book XVII, Ch. 1.

88 : 12. Sir Percivale. Percival is the hero of all the early versions of the quest for the Holy Grail, of which the best known are the *Conte del Graal* of Crestien de Troyes and the *Parzival* of Wolfram von Eschenbach. It is only in the late versions that he is succeeded by Galahad. Mr. Nutt, after noting that "in the earliest stages of the Arthurian cycle the preëminent hero is Gawain, who is also second only to Percival as hero of the Quest story," adds that "at a later stage

both were succeeded by Launcelot," and explains Galahad's superseding of Perceval by pointing out that the chief place in the quest would naturally be demanded for Launcelot, but that as this was inconsistent with his love of Guinevere, the problem was solved by bringing in a new Grail hero, Galahad, the son of Launcelot (*Legends of the Holy Grail*, pp. 71-72).

89 : 7. in red arms. Tennyson has dressed his Grail hero in white armor, but the mediaeval knight of the Grail, as Miss Jewett notes (*Holy Grail*, p. 101), wore red. All those who have seen Mr. Abbey's pictures in the Boston Public Library illustrating the Quest of the Holy Grail will remember that his hero also (and very effectively) wears red.

89 : 11. Joseph of Aramatheia. The earliest stories of the Grail deal with the Quest. Later, romances were written dealing with the early history of the Grail. According to the legend, Joseph of Arimathea, who took down from the cross the body of Our Lord, later journeyed westward, carrying with him the Grail, which finally came to Britain. See Maynadier, *Arthur of the English Poets*, p. 117. Joseph thus becomes an important figure in the Grail story, and in some of the romances is made the ancestor of the guardians of the Grail and of the Grail knight himself. For a full account of Joseph's relation to the story, see Professor Skeat's introduction to *Joseph of Arimathea*, Early English Text Society, Original Series, vol. 44.

90 : 3. Pelles and unto my lord Petchere. The exact relation of Pelles to the Grail knight is very hard to make out, and the account differs in different romances. Mr. Nitze (*Modern Philology*, I: 252-253) thinks that account the earliest which made Pelles uncle of Perceval and brother of the Fisher King. If we substitute Galahad for Perceval, this will serve as a tentative relationship. But this question does not much concern us; it is important to know that in our story, at least, King Pelles and a king called my lord Petchere and also King Pescheour live together in the Grail castle, and act as guardians of the Grail. Now in some versions of the story there is a King Fisherman, who is in some way connected with the Grail; as *pescheour* is Old French for fisher (cf. *pêcheur* of modern French), it is supposed that Malory mistook a common for a proper noun. (Professor Rhys does not agree with this hy-

pothesis, noting that "there is no evident reason why Malory should have failed to recognize the French for fisher any more in this context than elsewhere."—*A. L.*, p. 296.) Professor Mead (*Selections*, p. 281) notes on Book XIII, Ch. 18, that Malory identifies Pelles with "kynge Pescheour." It is at least true that in Book XI Launcelot sees the Grail while visiting King Pelles, and that in Ch. 18 of the present book it is said that he had seen it "at king Pescheour's house." But the conception of this book is, we think, of Pelles and Pescheour living together in a castle in which they had perhaps equal rights, or it might be better to say equal duties.

90 : 21. by enchantment. See the summary of Books XI and XII.

91 : 21. till I heal him. This is related in Book XVII, Ch. 21. The story of Balin's smiting the dolorous stroke is told in Book II, Chs. 15-16.

92 : 11. Nacien, the hermit. Who Nacien is, is told in Book XVII, Ch. 4.

94 : 16. the Holy Grail. At last the Grail itself appears. Professor Skeat says the word is from the low Latin *gradale* or *grasale*, a bowl or dish, and "the *seynt graal* was that Holy Dish which was used at the Last Supper, stolen by a servant of Pilate, — so says the story, — used by Pilate to wash his hands in before the multitude, given by Pilate to Joseph as a memorial of Christ, and finally used by Joseph to collect the Holy Blood flowing from the five wounds."—*Joseph of Ari-mathie*, pp. xxxvi-xxxvii, and on p. xl: "As regards the holy vessel itself, the legends tell us that it was finally transported to India, and still remains there. Nevertheless at the capture of Cæsarea in 1101, the Crusaders found what they imagined to be the very dish itself, made of one large emerald. It was sent to Genoa, and there shown as a relic, till Napoleon I transported it to Paris. In 1815 it was sent back to Genoa, but was cracked in the journey. At Genoa it is still preserved, in the treasury of the Cathedral of San Lorenzo, and is still venerated as being the veritable *Sacro Catino*. It is really made of greenish glass, and of an hexagonal shape."

94 : 31. I will make here avow. Compare Tennyson, *H. G.*, l. 202:—

"And Gawain sware and louder than the rest."

"Gawain's promptness reminds us that in the earlier versions it was Percival and Gawain alone who were represented as undertaking the quest." — WESTON.

95 : 19. *in my fellowship*. The tender pathos of this passage is not equalled in Tennyson.

98 : 15. *that hight Vagon*. City, castle, nor man are found elsewhere in Malory.

98 : 26. *Bagdemagus*. It was Bagdemagus who heard Merlin lamenting after he had been confined in his stone prison. See note on Book I, Ch. 20.

99 : 1. *Uwaine*. Uwaine, Ewain, and more commonly Iwain or Yvain is a well-known hero of Arthurian romance. As the son of Uriens, he is Gawaine's cousin, and like Gawaine he is distinguished for courtesy and valor. He is the hero of the Middle English romance *Iwain and Gawain*. Uwaine in Malory is less important than the original hero; indeed, Malory seems to have two Uwaines, not wholly distinguishable.

100 : 21. *as the book telleth*. A reminder that we should be glad that Malory "reduced" the book.

101 : 15. *Sarras*. Sarras is the city of the Saracens. In ll. 55–56 of *Joseph of Arimathie* it is explained that it was named for Sarah, the wife of Abraham.

101 : 17. *Evelake*. The relation of King Evelake to the story is sufficiently indicated here. For interesting remarks on Avallach, who was, Professor Rhys thinks, Evelake's Welsh original, see *Arthurian Legend*, p. 337.

105 : 5. *King of Denmark*. Who Melias de Lile is we are not told. He may, like Malory's Lady Lile d'Avelion of Book II, Ch. 1, have been Melias de l'Isle of somewhere.

109 : 5. *Abblasoure*. The only appearance in Malory.

109 : 13. *Castle of Maidens*. Mr. Nutt (*Studies*, pp. 191–194) gives Celtic parallels of this Castle of Maidens. See Professor Mead's *Selections* for several castles in Great Britain that have borne this name.

114 : 4. *seven deadly sins*. The seven deadly sins — pride, covetousness, lust, anger, gluttony, envy, sloth — were well known as such to the Middle Ages.

114 : 15. *Sir Aglovale*, as we learn in Book X, Ch. 23, was a brother of Sir Percivale and Sir Lamorak, as well as of Sir Tor and Sir Dornar, who are less well known. Griflet, who is sometimes called *le Fise de Dieu*, appears in Book I and in other places.

116 : 18. King Pescheour's house. See note on "my lord Petchere," Ch. 4.

118 : 20. heard the fowls sing. Fowl formerly meant simply *bird*, and not *domestic bird*. Compare Chaucer, *Prolog*, l. 9:—

"And smale fowles maken melodye."

121 : 8. leaves and no fruit. See *Matthew* 21 : 18-22 and *Mark* 11 : 12-14.

BOOKS XIV, XV, AND XVI

The fourteenth book relates the adventures of Sir Percivale in quest of the Grail. At the end of the book he boards a ship and departs. In this ship we find him in Book XVII, Ch. 2.

The six chapters of the fifteenth book tell of the adventures of Sir Launcelot.

Chapters 1-5 of Book XVI are occupied with the adventures of Gawaine, and Chapters 6-17 with those of Sir Bors, who comes at the end of the book into the ship which Percivale has taken.

BOOK XVII

122 : 2. the twenty knights. In Book XIV, Ch. 4, we read that Percivale, riding alone, was attacked by twenty knights and was saved only by the timely advent of Galahad. After delivering him Galahad rode away so rapidly that Percivale could not overtake him. His next appearance is in this chapter.

122 : 16. Ector de Maris. The brother of Launcelot, not Arthur's foster-father, the father of Kay.

123 : 14. were said of Launcelot du Lake. Gawain refers to Launcelot's prophecy, Book XIII, Ch. 3.

123 : 26. Castle of Carboneck. Carbonek, called also Corbyn, the name of the Grail castle in Malory, appears first merely as the abode of King Pelles. Professor Rhys derives the name thus: "The Kulhwch story (*Kulhwch and Olwen*, *Mabinogion*) refers to a mountain in the north called Bannawc.

Bannawc was also probably the name which became the Benwyk of Malory's *Morte Darthur*, the Benoic of the Huth Merlin, as the name of the country of King Ban (see Book I, Ch. 16). The same adjective qualifying *caer* (Welsh for city) would yield in old Welsh Caer Bannauc, written later Caer Vannawc or Vannawg, and it is the former we probably have in the name given by the romances as Carbonek." — A. L., p. 304.

123 : 32. **Sir Ulfen.** Dr. Sommer suggests that Ulfen is identical with Ufius (called *Ulfinus* in Geoffrey of Monmouth) (*Malory*, II, p. 182 n.).

124 : 10. **called Collibe.** Dr. Sommer (*Malory*, p. 158 n. 3) quotes the Old French original, which reads, "a forest which extended to the sea, which forest was called Chelibe." Malory gives this as the name of the sea.

125 : 18. **Logris.** A name for England. Mr. Martin says (*Selections*, p. 252), "England south of the Humber."

126 : 20. **Calidone.** Nennius, the early chronicler, in his list of Arthur's twelve great battles against the Saxons, places the seventh in "the wood Celidon, which the Britons call Cat Coit Celidon." This is explained as the Caledonian forest, stretching from Penrith to Carlisle (Giles, *Six English Chronicles*, pp. 408-409).

127 : 20. **Labor . . . Hurlame.** These are given as Lambar and Urlain in Mr. Nutt's summary of the *Queste*, the romance which was probably Malory's authority for the whole of his story of the Holy Grail (*Studies*, p. 47).

129 : 6. **Mordrains.** The name taken by King Evelake after his baptism. See Book XIII, Ch. 10.

129 : 9. **Isle of Turnance.** Called by Mr. Nutt (*Studies*, p. 48) the Turning Isle. Cf. Turning Castle, for which see Rhys, A. L.

131 : 5. **for his hardness.** The account of the wounding of Pellam, or Pelles, in Book II says that at a feast in Pellam's castle, Balin slew "a false knight Garlon," who was another of Pellam's guests, and that in trying to defend himself, Balin fled from room to room pursued by Pellam, until he came to a room where he found a spear. With this he smote King Pellam so that he lay many years wounded. (Cf. note on Book XIII, Ch. 5.) At the same time most of the castle fell down, pinning both in the ruins. This was the famous "dolor-

ous stroke." Undoubtedly this had been conceived of as the Grail Castle, and the spear was that which is found in Grail legends, and is explained as that with which Longinus pierced the body of Christ on the cross. Probably some tradition like this made it sacrilege for Balin to take the sword, and brought on him the curse for the dolorous stroke.

132 : 3. despised them in his books. It is true that Solomon sometimes utters warnings, but the writer is very modest in speaking of "*an evil wife*" (see *1 Kings* 11:3), and he forgets altogether the eloquent tribute of *Proverbs* 31 to the virtuous woman.

136 : 8. Carteloise. Carchelois in the *Queste* (Nutt, *Studies*, p. 49), and Earl Herno of Ch. 8 is Count Ernous.

143 : 6. she might not live. This castle with its strange custom is mentioned in Book II, Ch. 13, where a damsels who accompanies Balin is made to contribute blood, "but her blood helped not the lady. And as it telleth in the Sangreal, that Sir Percivale's sister helped that lady with her blood, whereof she was dead."

145 : 2. Mortoise, . . . rehearsed before. Marcoise in the *Queste*. It will be remembered that in Book VII, Ch. 24, the Green Knight tells Arthur that it was at a passage of the water of Mortaise that Beaumains slew the two knights, Sir Gherard and Sir Arnold. In Book IV, Ch. 8, a gentlewoman of great beauty (she afterwards turns out to be the devil in disguise) tells Percivale that she has seen Galahad (though she speaks of him as the red knight with the white shield) chasing two knights unto a water "the which is called Mortaise." And in Book XVI, Ch. 6, the passage referred to here, Launcelot "rode into a deep valley, and there he saw a river and an high mountain. And through the water he must needs pass, the which was hideous; and then in the name of God he took it with a good heart."

152 : 17. his fair daughter. Elaine, the mother of Galahad.

153 : 17. of our dreams. Book XVI, Chs. 2-5. Gawaine and Ector dreamed peculiar dreams, which were explained to them by Nacien the hermit.

154 : 4. Arthur's nephew slew. This is not related in Malory. Moreover in Book XX, Ch. 19, we find Bagdemagus still (or again) alive and talking with Launcelot.

154 : 15. **more than half.** Compare Tennyson, *H. G.*, ll. 718-720:—

— “And there sat Arthur on the dais-throne,
And those that had gone out upon the quest,
Wasted and worn, and but a tithe of them.”

156 : 2. **Galahad's well.** “Geoffrey speaks more than once of a well near which Merlin was usually to be found. In his text it is called ‘Fons Galabes,’ and said to be ‘in natione Gewisseorum.’ Fons Galabes, and Galahad's well probably refer to the same spring.” — RHYS, *A. L.*, pp. 167-168.

159 : 7. **Joseph.** The son of Joseph of Arimathea.

161 : 12. **An whole man.** See note on Book XIII, Ch. 5, “till I heal him.”

The story of the Grail as it is told in Malory follows very closely the French prose romance known as the *Queste del Saint Graal*. This is summarized in Mr. Nutt's *Studies*, pp. 38-52.

BOOK XVIII

This book is the source of Tennyson's *Launcelot and Elaine*, one of the most popular of the *Idylls*. *The Lady of Shalott* is Tennyson's earlier treatment of the same story.

168 : 11. **that he made in the quest.** See the last chapter of Book XIII.

168 : 18. **Chapters 1-8.** Summary: Launcelot, to avoid slander, withdraws himself a good deal from the company of Guinevere. This angers the queen, who reproaches him with showing attentions to other damosels and maidens, and in spite of Launcelot's protestations that he does this to avert slander, orders him from the court. He leaves in great heaviness. Soon after, at a feast given by the queen to the knights, Sir Patrise is poisoned by an apple (which Sir Pinel had prepared for Gawayne). Mador de la Porte, cousin of Sir Patrise, accuses the queen of the murder. It is decided by all that the queen's champion must do battle with Sir Mador. No knight offers to do battle for the queen, but at her request Sir Bors consents to become her champion, unless a better knight shall appear. Meanwhile Sir Bors warns Launcelot, who appears in time to do battle, overcomes Sir Mador, and discharges the

queen. Soon after this, the damsel of the lake, Nimue, who has always been friendly to Arthur's knights, comes to court, and tells them that the guilt was Pinel's. Pinel flees, the queen finally pardons Mador, and the matter ends. Launcelot, of course, remains at court.

169 : 4. Winchester. See note on "Camelot," Book XIII, Ch. 1.

169 : 9. Galahad, the haut prince. Not the Grail knight. See Book VII, Ch. 27, and note.

169 : 22. Mador had given him. See the summary of Chs. 1-8.

169 : 25. Astolat. Malory's identification with Guildford in Surrey is doubted by some writers. Professor Rhys says: "The origin of the name which variously appears as Shalott, Escalot, Astolat, and other forms was probably Alclut, the old Welsh name of the Rock of Dumbarton in the Clyde." — *A. L.*, p. 393. It will be remembered that Astolat is the Shalott of Tennyson's *Lady of Shalott*.

172 : 3. Elaine le Blank. That is, Elaine the *white* or *fair*.

"Elaine the fair, Elaine the lovable,
Elaine the lily maid of Astolat."

— *Lancelot and Elaine*, ll. 1-2.

172 : 6. a token of hers. It was the custom for every knight who had a lady to wear some token of hers in the jousts. In Crestien de Troyes' *The Maid with the Narrow Sleeves*, translated by Newell in *King Arthur and the Table Round*, Vol. II, we have a very pretty story founded on this custom.

172 : 23. upon a day. "Once upon a time" (Baldwin, § 352. 2).

174 : 11. Ozanna le Cure Hardy. This is the only mention of Sir Ozanna. Around his name William Morris has written a poem, *The Chapel in Lyoness* in *The Defence of Guinevere and Other Poems*.

174 : 12. these fifteen knights. Just which fifteen from the list given above it would be hard to decide.

176 : 20. Alisander le Orphelin. The valor and adventures of Alisander are recited in Book X, where also it is said that "it happed so that Alisander had never grace nor fortune to

come to Arthur's court." It is said here (Book X, Ch. 40) and in Book XIX, Ch. 11, that Sir Bellangere, the son of Alisander, avenged the death of his father, who was traitorously slain by King Mark. For other accounts of Alisander, see Paton, *Fairy Mythology*, pp. 55-59.

178 : 22. **Baudwin of Brittany.** In Book I, Ch. 7, it is said that Arthur appointed him constable.

179 : 27. **he was Sir Launcelot.** This incident is much like Eurycleia's recognition of Odysseus by the scar on his leg, though there is no reason to suppose that incident imitated. A scar is a natural enough mark of identity.

183 : 19. **that loved him best.** Bors de Ganis, Launcelot's nephew. In Book XVII, Ch. 23, Launcelot says: "Ye and I will never depart asunder whilst our lives may last."

186 : 22. **more kindlier . . . than she.** Compare Tennyson, *L. and E.*, ll. 838-856.

189 : 8. **All Hallowmass Day.** November 1. As the tournament had been at Assumption, August 15, we know how long Launcelot has been with the hermit.

193 : 3. **Sir Lamorak de Galis.** We have here again the names of the three mightiest knights.

193 : 11. **plain, faithful, and true.** It is the ideal of knighthood which makes him appreciate a knight like Gareth, which is Malory's best equipment for writing this book. The few simple words in which he characterizes the "good knight" are as eloquent as they are sincere.

195 : 20. **ghostly father.** As *ghost* is the old English word for spirit, so ghostly father means spiritual father.

199. **Chapters 21-24.** These chapters tell of jousts on Christmas, from which Launcelot absents himself. While living in the woods with a hermit, he is wounded by an arrow badly aimed by a huntress. He is healed in time to be present at Arthur's great jousts at Candlemas, where, wearing a gold sleeve given him by Guinevere, he acquits himself so well that Arthur marvels.

At this time there seems to have been a little return of the old-time spirit of Arthur's court. The saddening effect of the quest for the Grail with its loss of many knights has been a little overcome. Launcelot and Gareth, Gawaine, Bors, and other good knights remain, and engage again in their former sports. It is only the pause before the storm; for presently

begin the misfortunes which end with the dissolution of the order of the Round Table and the death of Arthur.

200 : 32. therefore she had a good end. This is hardly the immediate cause of Guinevere's good end. Yet Malory is right in making here "a little mention" for Guinevere; for though she was unfaithful to Arthur, she was not light of love: she began by loving Launcelot, and she loved him to the close. Nor are we told that she ever had loved Arthur. We must of course judge with Tennyson that it "was her duty to have loved the highest," for right is right, and suffers no compromise; but we can at the same time feel some of the sympathy with Guinevere which inspires such a poem as William Morris' *Defence of Guinevere*.

BOOKS XIX AND XX

The chief matter of Book XIX is the carrying away of Guinevere by Meliagrance, a knight who has long loved her, and watched his chance to seize her when she is insufficiently guarded. She is rescued by Launcelot. Meliagrance then accuses her of treason to Arthur, and Launcelot fights Meliagrance in her defence, is imprisoned, but at length escapes, and returns to court, where he is more cherished than ever before. A few minor matters follow.

In Book XX it is said that Agravaine and Mordred had long been trying to persuade their brothers to tell Arthur of the love of Launcelot and Guinevere, but they had refused. Finally Mordred and Agravaine tell Arthur, who gives them permission to take Launcelot. Launcelot, however, fights in his own defence. Guinevere is sentenced to death, but is rescued by Launcelot and his kinsmen in a battle in which Launcelot has the bad fortune to slay Gareth and Gaheris unwittingly. Arthur and Gwaine besiege Joyous Gard, where Launcelot has carried Guinevere, but are unable to achieve anything, while Launcelot in return refuses to do his utmost against the man who made him knight. By the Pope's command, a peace is made, and Launcelot restores Guinevere to Arthur, and goes over sea to Brittany. Hither presently Arthur and Gwaine follow him with an army, and besiege Benwick, where he is. Arthur leaves Mordred as ruler of his kingdom in his absence. This is the situation at the beginning of Book XXI.

BOOK XXI

201 : 4. a parliament. The term *parliament* began to be used in the first half of the thirteenth century, so that this is a parliament of the romancer and not of Arthur's kingdom.

201 : 15. longed unto the wedding. Surely there is a very modern tone to this little ruse. We do not believe that even the queen of Arthur's England went to London shopping for a trousseau.

202 : 8. shot great guns. Another anachronism. Guns were used in the fourteenth century but not in the sixth.

202 : 19. book and bell and candle. The ceremony of excommunication. The book contained the curse which was pronounced while a bell was tolled, and after the act a candle was solemnly extinguished.

203 : 30. new-fangle. If Malory is sometimes quaint and old-fashioned, we cannot say this of his comment. It is as new as our own time, although as old as history. "Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these," writes the philosopher of old. — *Ecclesiastes 7 : 10.*

205 : 19. Benwick. In Book I, Ban of Benwick and Bors of Gaul came from over sea to help Arthur, and although Launcelot has apparently always lived in Britain, where he has his castle of Joyous Gard, he seems to have held still in some way an interest in Benwick, the city of his father, King Ban. Professor Rhys, as it will be remembered, thinks the original of Benwick was Bannau in Wales, but this Benwick is certainly somewhere in France. In XX, Ch. 18, Malory tells us that "some men call it Bayonne, and some men call it Beaume," and this is perhaps sufficient clue to Benwick as he conceived it.

206 : 10. wilt see my tomb. Gawaine's request is a most natural one. He has been one of Arthur's most famous knights, but for him knightly deeds are no more. Of late the order of the Table Round has fallen from its glory, and he turns to the earlier days, when Launcelot and he were friends and of all the knights were those nearest Arthur; a reconciliation is not possible, and so his last request is that the flower of Arthur's knights shall see his tomb.

206 : 19. skull of him. Perhaps this is Caxton's authority for the mention in his preface, "Item in the castle of Dover

ye may see Gawain's skull," or this may have been a relic as well known to Caxton as to Malory.

206 : 21. **Barham Down.** This is about six miles from Canterbury.

207 : 5. **westward.** Tennyson has made much of this (*P. of A.*, l. 29):—

"Then ere that last weird battle in the west,"

and again in his epilogue, *To the Queen*:—

"The darkness of that battle in the west
Where all of high and holy dies away."

207 : 7. **Salisbury.** Merlin had prophesied (Book II, Ch. 2) that there should be a great battle at Salisbury, in which Arthur's own son Mordred should be against him.

207 : 8. **Trinity Sunday.** Eight weeks after Easter, and hence one week after Pentecost, which so often dates events of Arthur's reign.

207 : 30. **came Sir Gawaine.** This last friendly office of Gawaine's is changed in Tennyson into a light, meaningless visit.

208 : 28. **Lucan . . . Sir Bedivere.** Tennyson, who makes much of Bedivere, omits any mention of Lucan, who like Bedivere is with Arthur till the last.

210 : 13. **an hundred thousand.** Malory's number is magnificent, if impossible.

213 : 4. **lightly bring you word.** Tennyson, who follows Malory closely here, has used this expression three times.

213 : 22. **waters wap and waves wan.** So Tennyson:—

"I heard the ripple washing in the reeds
And the wild water lapping on the crag."

— II. 238–239, and see II. 284–285.

214 : 24. **vale of Avilion.** Avilion, or Avalon, as it is more commonly written, has provoked a great deal of discussion. It is now very generally admitted to be the Celtic otherworld of never-ending delight; but this does not solve the problems of its identity. Early in the twelfth century it became identified with Glastonbury, but the origin of this identity is not clear and many explanations are offered. The monks of Glastonbury claimed that it had been founded by Joseph of Arimathea "The King," writes Professor Rhys (*A. L.*, p. 331),

"is said to have had the pretensions of Glastonbury examined and approved, since they struck not only at Rome but also at St. David's and the traditions of the Welsh, who were a source of annoyance to Henry. So in the year 1189 the said monks requited the King's favor by discovering at Glastonbury the tombs of Arthur and his wife, together with that of his favorite Gwalchmai (Gawain). This discovery was calculated to discourage the troublesome Welshmen who were credited with looking forward to the return of Arthur to lead them to victory over all their enemies." For a discussion of this subject, together with a bibliography of the most important things written on it, see Miss Paton's *Fairy Mythology*, pp. 25-48. Dr. Maynadier describes the site of Glastonbury: "It is the most conspicuous place in middle Somerset, for the town stands on the northwest slope of a group of hills culminating in the steep Glastonbury Tor, a landmark for miles around. Except for a little space toward the east, where the land rises a few feet higher than on the other sides, and where the railway now comes, the hills and the town of Glastonbury are encircled by rich, level meadows, crossed by hedges and ditches and dotted with trees. At varying distances beyond the smooth green fields rise hills of varying height, except where the flat country stretches like a floor northwest to the Bristol Channel. Sometimes in winter the meadows are still covered by water; and years ago, when they were unreclaimed marsh ground, they were covered so often that Glastonbury was frequently almost an island. Partly from this fact, it would seem, came its confusion with Avalon. . . ." — *Arthur of the English Poets*, pp. 182-183.

214 : 25. *pray for my soul.* Tennyson greatly expands this. See ll. 413-455.

216 : 3. *Morgan le Fay.* We have noted before that it is Morgan who has charge of healing Arthur's wounds, though in other situations she is generally hostile to Arthur. The Queen of the Waste Lands appeared in Book XIV, Ch. 1, as a recluse and the aunt of Percivale. The story of Nimue and Pelleas is told in Book IV; Nimue is always friendly to Arthur and his knights.

216 : 15. *made it to be written.* Compare Tennyson, *P. of A.*, ll. 1-5: —

"That story which the bold Sir Bedivere," etc.

217 : 14. **Sir Launcelot du Lake.** Tennyson, perhaps more appropriately, closes with the death of Arthur, but as a whole the tale has been of Launcelot and Guinevere, and Malory carries it to their deaths.

217 : 22. **double traitor.** Sir Mordred. That is, first a traitor to Launcelot himself and then to Arthur.

218 : 3. **subject.** This may refer to Mordred alone, but it seems more like a plural. It occurs as a plural in Shakspere; see *Hamlet*, I, 1, 72:—

“So nightly toils the subject of the land?”

218 : 10. **Sir Gareth.** In Book XX, Ch. 16, Launcelot enumerates some of the causes of his sorrow over Gareth: “One is for I made him knight; another is I wot well he loved me above all other knights; and the third is, he was passing noble, true, courteous, and gentle and well-conditioned.” Everywhere do we find only “worship” spoken of Gareth.

222 : 3. **either gray or white.** A reference to the religious orders. At the second council of Lyons, in 1274, four orders of friars were sanctioned by Gregory X, the Hermit or Austin Friars, the Carmelite or White Friars, the Dominicans or Black, and the Franciscans or Gray Friars.

223 : 18. **Sir Gahalantine.** These knights are kindred of Launcelot’s, and their stopping here because he does is a tribute to him as the greatest of his family.

224 : 12. **thirty mile.** Professor Mead notes (*Selections*, p. 320): “The distance from Amesbury to Glastonbury by road is forty-seven miles.”

225 : 13. **Raines.** Rennes in ancient Brittany.

225 : 25. **my careful body.** *Careful* has here the sense of *full of care*. Compare Shakspere, *Henry V*, IV, 248:—

“Our debts, our careful wives.”

226 : 3. **dwined.** Dwine, now obsolete, has by the addition of the frequentative termination *-le* yielded us *dwindle*.

226 : 24. **Alnwick.** A description of this castle was published in *Littell’s Living Age*, V, 188, pp. 817–823 (Reprinted from *Cornhill Magazine*).

226 : 24. **Bamborough.** Bamborough Castle is described by Dr. Maynadier, *Arthur of the English Poets*, pp. 181-182.

229 : 3. **spear in the rest.** This noble tribute to Launcelot, which reminds us a little of Xenophon's words on the death of Cyrus, has been well earned. Launcelot has been the ideal of chivalry, the mirror of knighthood; he has never failed in courtesy and kindliness, nor has he ever shrunk from a foe.

229 : 9. **Sir Constantine.** Geoffrey of Monmouth (Book XI, Ch. 2) says that "Arthur gave up his crown to his kinsman Constantine, son of Cador, Duke of Cornwall, in the year of the Incarnation of Our Lord five hundred and forty-two."

229 : 22. **some English books.** The Middle English metrical romance of *Le Morte Arthur*, which Professor Mead and Professor Bruce contend that Malory did not use, ends as follows:—

"Of Lancelot du lake tell I no more,
 But thus, *by-leve these ermytes sevyn*;
And yit is Arthur beryd thore,
 And quene Gaynour, as I you nevyn;
With monkes that ar Ryght of lore.
 They Rede and syng with nylde stevyn:
'Ihesu, that suffred woundes sore,
 Graunt us All the blysse of hevyn!'"
Amen!

— ll. 3962-3969.

The italics are mine; Professor Bruce's own interpretation of this passage as expressed in his marginal note is: "Thus the seven companions remain there as hermits, and pray with their monks that Jesus may grant them the bliss of heaven." — Early English Text Society, Extra Series, No. 88.

229 : 24. **favour of makers.** That is, of poets; Malory ascribes the idea to the "Anglomaniacs" of his day. Happily he can quote a real authority!

230 : 1. **an hundred and forty.** This should of course be fifty.

230 : 7. **ninth year of the reign of King Edward the Fourth.** This extended from March 4, 1869, to March 3, 1870.

GLOSSARY

References are by page and line. The first occurrence of a word is usually given.

Abate, moderate, calm, 38 : 22, 56 : 14.
Abide, await, endure, 172 : 25.
Abought, paid for, 60 : 17.
Abraid, started, 61 : 17.
Accompt, count, reckon, 86 : 21, 97 : 26.
Accorded, agreed, 1 : 9, 4 : 12.
Ado, to do, 23 : 33.
Advised (be), consider, take care, 58 : 22.
Affiance, confidence, trust, 204 : 23.
After, afterward, 4 : 21.
Again, against, 117 : 4.
Again-say, retract, 95 : 9.
Against, before, 76 : 13; opposite, 163 : 8.
Aknowen (be), be informed of, 76 : 7.
All out, entirely, 211 : 32.
Allegeance, lightening, 195 : 30.
Allow, give credit to, 36 : 4.
Almeries, chests, 166 : 17.
Amazed, stunned, 60 : 9.
An, and, if, 14 : 16, 29 : 14, 58 : 21.
Anealed, anointed, 226 : 31.
Anon, at once, then, 8 : 33.
Appeal, impeach, accuse, 190 : 20.
Araged, enraged, 150 : 11.
Araised, raised, 203 : 5.
Arase, blot out, 200 : 3.
Aretted, accounted, *Preface*.
As, when, 173 : 9.
As at, as, 28 : 9.
Assail (n.), attack, 174 : 7.
Assoil, absolve, 121 : 23, 222 : 16.
Assotted, infatuated, *Notes*.
Astonied, mazed, stunned, 59 : 19, 139 : 22.
At, of, by, 115 : 16.
At-after, after, 69 : 12.
Avail (n.), advantage, 38 : 25, 211 : 5.
Vision, vision, 208 : 25, 224 : 5.
Avoid, quit, get away from, 42 : 8.
Awayward, away, 65 : 8.
Bain, bath, 189 : 20.
Barget, little ship, 196 : 15.
Battle, army, division of an army, 6 : 4, 210 : 6.
Bawdy, dirty, 36 : 2.
Beams, trumpets, 209 : 23.
Became, went, 94 : 22; was become, had gone, 117 : 3.
Behight, promised, 166 : 23.
Beholden, under obligation, 10 : 5, 183 : 10.
Behoveth, belongeth, 100 : 14.

Beleft, entrusted, left, 30 : 14.
55 : 1.

Besants, gold coins, 215 : 12.

Beseem, be appropriate to, 40 : 12.

Beseen, equipped, 12 : 25, 29 : 1, 74 : 28.

Beskift, shove off, *Notes*.

Bestead, beset, 205 : 32, 218 : 1.

Betaken, entrusted, 9 : 26.

Betaught, entrusted, 108 : 25.

Betimes, promptly, 48 : 17, 97 : 1.

Betook, entrusted, 30 : 1, 172 : 18.

Bobaunce, pride, arrogance, 185 : 6.

Borrows, pledges, securities, 63 : 9.

Bound, ready, 3 : 13.

Bounté, bounty, kindness, 194 : 29, 54 : 24.

Brast, burst, 50 : 12, 99 : 32.

Brenning, burning, 225 : 3, 227 : 29.

Brent, burned, 150 : 9.

Broaches, spits, 36 : 8.

Brose, pottage, 30 : 12.

Bur, hand-guard of a spear, 211 : 15.

By, at, 7 : 18; during, 209 : 2.

Bywaryd, bestowed, 69 : 18.

Caitiff-knight, coward-knight, 187 : 22.

Cankered, inveterate, 205 : 6.

Careful, full of care or grief, 225 : 25.

Carracks, small boats, 204 : 3.

Cast, *reflex. v.*, propose, intend, 121 : 13, 193 : 26.

Cedle, note, schedule, 205 : 10.

Cered, enclosed in wax, 225 : 13.

Certes, certainly, 87 : 27.

Chafed, angered, heated, 174 : 18.

Chaflet, platform, 207 : 18.

Cheer, countenance, 56 : 15.

Chierte, dearness, 96 : 9.

Cleped, called, 163 : 14.

Complished, filled, complete, 28 : 22.

Conceit, thought, 29 : 27.

Conning, knowing, ability, *Preface*.

Conversant, inhabiting, 109 : 22, 126 : 19.

Cost, side, 50 : 21.

Cousin-germain, first cousin, 178 : 24.

Covetise, covetousness, 108 : 19.

Covin, deceit, 111 : 11.

Croft, a vault, 156 : 7.

Danger (in), in the power of, 42 : 28.

Deadly, mortal, 139 : 33.

Deal, portion (survives in great deal), 190 : 28.

Debonair, bland, agreeable, 129 : 2.

Defend, forbid, prevent, 29 : 30, 110 : 5, 193 : 27.

Degree, prize, 76 : 16.

Departed, divided, 52 : 21.

Departition, departure, 95 : 17.

Dere, harm, 104 : 17.

Devised, looked at, 145 : 20.

Devoir, service, danger, 71 : 26, 210 : 9.

Dirige, dirge, 225 : 1.
 Disadventure, misfortune, 119 : 20.
 Discover, make known, 35 : 9, 53 : 2, 201 : 12.
 Disherited, disinherited, 102 : 17.
 Disworship, shame, 44 : 8.
 Do, cause, 74 : 12, 90 : 31.
 Dole, a distribution of money, 219 : 3; lamentation, 10 : 1, 65 : 9.
 Don, gift, 29 : 17.
 Done, caused (see do), disposed of, 73 : 23.
 Doughty, bold, sturdy, 38 : 12.
 Dressed, addressed, directed, 146 : 7.
 Dressed up, raised, 117 : 7.
 Dretching, being disturbed in sleep, 227 : 15.
 Dure, last, endure, 131 : 30, 219 : 13.
 Duresse, hardness, 104 : 20.
 Dwined, dwindled, 226 : 3.
 Enbushed, hidden by woods, 18 : 26.
 Enchafe, heat by exercise, 185 : 23.
 Enchieve, achieve, 87 : 1.
 Enforce, constrain, 191 : 14.
 Engin, device, 193 : 10; machine, 202 : 7.
 Enow, enough, 26 : 16.
 Errant, wandering, 57 : 16, 105 : 19.
 Erst, formerly, 172 : 17.
 Evensong, evening prayer, 38 : 31.

Everych, each one (*intensive*), 98 : 18.
 Explicit, ends, *exit*, 24 : 32.
 Fain, glad, 123 : 28; gladly, 4 : 5, 48 : 7.
 Fare (v.), go, 29 : 6; prosper, 175 : 33; grieve, 186 : 6.
 Fare (n.), lamentation, disturbance, 220 : 13.
 Faren, treated, 56 : 24.
 Fast (by), hard by, close, 39 : 3.
 Faute, lack, 26 : 21.
 Fealty, oath of vassalage, 47 : 3.
 Fear, frighten, 59 : 7.
 Fiaunce, affiance, 5 : 9.
 Finding, keep, supply, 30 : 4.
 Fleet, float, 87 : 14.
 Flemed, put to flight, 113 : 3, 215 : 6.
 Foiled, thwarted, 200 : 15.
 Foining, thrusting (fencing term), 34 : 9, 211 : 12.
 Force (no), no matter, 23 : 3, 50 : 7, 199 : 14.
 Forhewen, hewn to pieces, 50 : 19, 60 : 13.
 Forthink, regret, 149 : 16.
 Forthinketh me, *impers.*, *const.*, I am sorry, 95 : 15.

Gainest, nearest, 66 : 21.
 Garnish, supply, 2 : 12.
 Gat, begot, 22 : 10.
 Gear, equipment, 33 : 13.
 Ghostly, spiritual, non-secular, 195 : 20.
 Go, walk, 23 : 2, 29 : 6, 74 : 15, 224 : 13; going, 23 : 9.
 Gramercy, great thanks, 19 : 22, 39 : 7, 80 : 10.

Greses, grises, steps, 156 : 15.
 Guise, fashion, 180 : 13.

Hale and how, a sailor's cry, 57 : 12.
 Halp, helped, 141 : 22, 174 : 6.
 Harbingers, messengers sent on to prepare lodgings, 79 : 26.
 Hardiness, hardihood, bravery, 15 : 8.
 Hardy, bold, 46 : 24.
 Haut, high, noble, 89 : 23.
 Hie, get, hasten, 33 : 17.
 Hight, is or was called, 2 : 16, 16 : 28, 32 : 5.
 Holp, helped, 143 : 22, 212 : 16, and holpen, 214 : 30.
 Holt, wood, 214 : 30.
 Houseled, given the eucharist, 226 : 21.
 Hoved, waited, 174 : 15; heaved, 91 : 6.
 Hurtle, dash, 50 : 17.

Inde (color of), dark blue, 48 : 10.
 Instantly, strictly, *Preface*.

Jesseraunt and -aunce, cuirass, 14 : 10, 93 : 5.
 Jolly, hearty, buoyant, 61 : 3.

Keep, guard, care, 14 : 17, 68 : 13.
 Kemps, champions, 42 : 10.
 Knave, boy, servant, 36 : 12.

Lain, conceal, 180 : 1.
 Large of, generous with, 40 : 7.
 Laud, praise, glory, 180 : 22.

Laund(e), lawn, plain, 38 : 32.
 Leech, physician, 22 : 26, 123 : 21.
 Let, cause to, 8 : 2, 76 : 23; hinder, 37 : 23, 204 : 4.
 Liber, book, 24 : 32.
 Licours, lecherous, 200 : 24.
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